

# Washoe County agrees to pay Incline residents tax refunds

By Susan Voyles, Reno Gazette-Journal

Washoe County Commissioners unanimously have agreed to pay 8,700 Incline Village homeowners court-ordered property tax refunds in a long-running battle that stems from prior rules used to judge Tahoe views and beaches.

But at the end of the discussion Tuesday night, County Commission Chairman John Breternitz said he is opposed to charging other taxing entities their share of \$6 million of interest costs on those tax refunds.

And that vote to charge the others their share of the tax refund is required to be unanimous, setting up an interesting debate on who's responsible for all that interest cost when the issue comes back for a vote on Sept. 13.

"From a moral standpoint, are we justified in doing that?" Breternitz said.

David Creekman, a chief deputy district attorney, said five other lawsuits pending by the Incline Village residents remain outstanding. A case before the Supreme Court filed in 2003 contends North Shore property values are pegged much higher than those at the lake in Douglas County, violating a constitutional requirement for fair and uniform taxes.

Creekman said that case has enormous fiscal impact if lost.

But the immediate question is paying roughly \$40 million in taxes stemming from a lawsuit supported by the Village League to Save Incline Assets for the 2006-07 tax year.

**Read the whole story**