



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 22, 2019

Ms. Sandra D. Carpenter
General Counsel
Round Rock Independent School District
1 Chisholm Trail, Suite 400
Round Rock, Texas 78681

OR2019-10607

Dear Ms. Carpenter:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 760745 (TPIA# 2019-231).

The Round Rock Independent School District (the "district") received a request for specified contractual agreements and annual membership dues related to intergovernmental relations. You state the district will release some information. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Escamilla and Poneck, LLP ("EP"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified EP of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue should not be released. *See Gov't Code § 552.305(d); see also Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances).* We have reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.¹

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See Gov't Code*

¹We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988).* This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

§ 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from EP explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude EP has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the district may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest EP may have in the information. The district must release the submitted information.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Kelly McWethy
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KSM/eb

Ref: ID# 760745

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party
(w/o enclosures)