



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

May 13, 2020

Ms. LeAnn M. Quinn
Assistant City Attorney
City of Cedar Park
450 Cypress Creek Road, Building One
Cedar Park, Texas 78613

OR2020-13527

Dear Ms. Quinn:

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# 828176 (Ref. No. CS 20-173).

The City of Cedar Park (the "city") received a request for information related to a specified request for qualifications. We understand the city does not maintain some of the requested information.¹ You state the city will release some information. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of McCreary, Veselka, Bragg, and Allen, P.C. ("MVBA"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified MVBA of the request for information and of the right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information 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 information.

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

¹ The Act does not require a governmental body to create or release information that did not exist when a request for information was received. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266, 267-68 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 563 at 8 (1990), 555 at 1-2 (1990), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from MVBA explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude MVBA 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 city may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest MVBA may have in the information.

Section 552.136 of the Government Code provides, "Notwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential."² Gov't Code § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining "access device"). This office has determined insurance policy numbers are access device numbers for purposes of section 552.136. *See* Open Records Decision No. 684 at 9 (2009). Accordingly, the city must withhold the insurance policy numbers in the submitted information under section 552.136 of the Government Code. The city must release the remaining 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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

Deborah Southerland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

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² The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

Ref: ID# 828176

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party
(w/o enclosures)