



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

June 2, 2020

Mr. Mehran Jadidi
Assistant City Attorney
City of Galveston
P.O. Box 779
Galveston, Texas 77553-0779

OR2020-15199

Dear Mr. Jadidi:

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# 831607 (ORR# W007276).

The City of Galveston (the "city") received a request for communications between named individuals during a specified time period. The city states it is releasing some of the requested information. The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.116 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception the city claims and reviewed the submitted information. We have also received and considered comments from the requestor. *See* Gov't Code § 552.304 (interested party may submit comments stating why information should or should not be released).

Section 552.116 of the Government Code provides,

(a) An audit working paper of an audit of the state auditor or the auditor of a state agency, an institution of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, a county, a municipality, a school district, a hospital district, or a joint board operating under Section 22.074, Transportation Code, including any audit relating to the criminal history background check of a public school employee, is excepted from [required public disclosure]. If information in an audit working paper is also maintained in another record, that other record is not excepted from [public disclosure] by this section.

(b) In this section:

(1) "Audit" means an audit authorized or required by a statute of this state or the United States, the charter or an ordinance of a municipality, an order of the commissioners court of a county, the bylaws adopted by or other action of the governing board of a

hospital district, a resolution or other action of a board of trustees of a school district, including an audit by the district relating to the criminal history background check of a public school employee, or a resolution or other action of a joint board described by Subsection (a) and includes an investigation.

(2) "Audit working paper" includes all information, documentary or otherwise, prepared or maintained in conducting an audit or preparing an audit report, including:

(A) intra-agency and interagency communications; and

(B) drafts of the audit report or portions of those drafts.

Gov't Code § 552.116. The city asserts the submitted information consists of audit working papers pertaining to an audit conducted by the city. The city states, and included statement from the city's Office of the City Auditor explaining, the submitted documents consist of audit working papers related to a "current audit plan approved by City Council." *See id.* § 552.116(b)(1). Based on these representations and our review, we agree the submitted information constitutes audit working papers. Therefore, the city may withhold the submitted information under section 552.116 of the Government Code.

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,

Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/gw

Ref: ID# 831607

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)