



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

March 7, 2008

Mr. Benjamin V. Lugg
Assistant City Attorney
City of Corpus Christi
P.O. Box 9277
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9277

OR2008-03145

Dear Mr. Lugg:

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# 304506.

The City of Corpus Christi (the "city") received a request for all plans, budgets, cost estimates, and communications regarding the placement of the police firing range and fire tower facility funded in the 2000 bond election. You state that most of the requested information will be released to the requestor. You claim portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under section 552.136 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.136 provides as follows:

(a) In this section, "access device" means a card, plate, code, account number, personal identification number, electronic serial number, mobile identification number, or other telecommunications service, equipment, or instrument identifier or means of account access that alone or in conjunction with another access device may be used to:

- (1) obtain money, goods, services, or another thing of value; or
- (2) initiate a transfer of funds other than a transfer originated solely by paper instrument.

- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, 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.

Gov't Code § 552.136. You state that the marked information consists of account numbers that are confidential under section 552.136. However, you have not explained, nor is it apparent to this office, how the marked information constitutes "credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number[s]" for purposes of section 552.136. Consequently, the city may not withhold the marked information under section 552.136 of the Government Code. Therefore, the submitted information must be released to the requestor.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must file suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such a challenge, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can challenge that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or

complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henisha D. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "H" and "A".

Henisha D. Anderson
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

HDA/mcf

Ref: ID# 304506

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. John Kelley
Managing Editor
We the People Newspaper
P.O. Box 537
Corpus Christi, Texas 78403
(w/o enclosures)