



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

November 5, 2012

Mr. Ross Fischer
Ms. Erin Higginbotham
Denton, Navarro, Rocha & Bernal
2500 West William Cannon, Suite 609
Austin, Texas 78745

OR2012-17697

Dear Mr. Fischer and Ms. Higginbotham:

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# 474235.

Karnes County (the "county"), which you represent, received a request for records of commissioners court meetings, including (1) the agenda and minutes for a specified meeting; (2) a certified agenda of an executive session regarding a specified item; and (3) the previous three meeting agendas and minutes, including the last budget workshop. You state some of the requested information has been released. You claim the rest of the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the information you submitted.

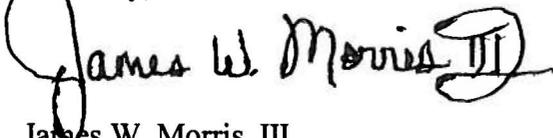
Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This exception encompasses information made confidential by other statutes. Section 551.104 of the Open Meetings Act, chapter 551 of the Government Code, provides in part that "[t]he certified agenda or tape of a closed meeting is available for public inspection and copying only under a court order issued under Subsection (b)(3)." *Id.* § 551.104(c). Thus, such information cannot be released to a member of the public in response to an open records request. *See* Attorney General Opinion JM-995 at 5-6 (1988) (public disclosure of certified agenda of closed meeting may be accomplished only under procedures provided in Open Meetings Act). Section 551.146 of the Open Meetings Act

makes it a criminal offense to disclose a certified agenda or tape recording of a lawfully closed meeting to a member of the public. *See* Gov't Code § 551.146(a)-(b); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 495 at 4 (1988) (attorney general lacks authority to review certified agendas or tapes of executive sessions to determine whether governmental body may withhold such information under statutory predecessor to Gov't Code § 552.101). We therefore agree the county must withhold the responsive certified agenda of a closed meeting of the commissioners court under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 551.104 of the Government Code.¹

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.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, 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 must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



James W. Morris, III
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JWM/bhf

Ref: ID# 474235

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹We note Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009), a previous determination issued by this office, authorizes all governmental bodies to withhold specified categories of information without the necessity of requesting a decision under the Act, including a certified agenda and tape of a closed meeting under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 551.104 of the Government Code.