



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

April 23, 2013

Ms. Amy L. Sims
Assistant City Attorney
City of Lubbock
P.O. Box 2000
Lubbock, Texas 79408-2000

OR2013-06634

Dear Ms. Sims:

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# 484789.

The City of Lubbock (the "city") received a request for current contracts pertaining to deferred compensation or defined contribution plans and a specified trust report. You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.102, 552.117, 552.136, and 552.147 of the Government Code.¹ Additionally, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of ICMA Retirement Corporation, ING Life Insurance and Annuity Company, MetLife, New York Life Insurance Company ("New York Life"), and Security Benefit. Accordingly, you notified these companies of the request and of their rights to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d) (permitting interested third party to submit to attorney general reasons why requested information should not be released); Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permitted governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception to disclosure under the circumstances). We have received comments from New York Life. We have considered the submitted arguments and reviewed the submitted information.

¹Although you also raise section 552.1175 of the Government Code, the proper exception in this instance is section 552.117 of the Government Code because the city holds the information at issue in an employment context.

Initially, we note that an interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this decision, we have only received comments from New York Life. Thus, we find none of the remaining third parties have demonstrated that they have any protected proprietary interests in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110(a)-(b); 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 any of the remaining third parties' information on the basis of any proprietary interests they may have in the information.

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. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information if it (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) is not of legitimate concern to the public. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). To demonstrate the applicability of common-law privacy, both prongs of this test must be established. *Id.* at 681-82. This office has found that personal financial information not relating to a financial transaction between an individual and a governmental body is generally intimate or embarrassing. *See generally* Open Records Decision Nos. 545 (1990) (deferred compensation information, participation in voluntary investment program, election of optional insurance coverage, mortgage payments, assets, bills, and credit history), 373 (1983) (sources of income not related to financial transaction between individual and governmental body protected under common-law privacy). Upon review, we find the information we have marked is highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate public concern. Therefore, the city must withhold the information we have marked pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.² However, we find none of the remaining information is highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest. Accordingly, none of the remaining information may be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Section 552.102 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information in a personnel file, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwanted invasion of personal privacy." Gov't Code § 552.102(a). We understand the city to assert the privacy analysis under section 552.102(a) is the same as the common-law privacy test under section 552.101 of the Government Code, which is noted above. *See Indus. Found.*, 540

²As our ruling is dispositive for this information, we need not address your remaining arguments against its disclosure.

S.W.2d at 685. In *Hubert v. Harte-Hanks Texas Newspapers, Inc.*, 652 S.W.2d 546, 549-51 (Tex. App.—Austin 1983, *writ ref'd n.r.e.*), the Third Court of Appeals ruled the privacy test under section 552.102(a) is the same as the *Industrial Foundation* privacy test. However, the Texas Supreme Court expressly disagreed with *Hubert's* interpretation of section 552.102(a) and held its privacy standard differs from the *Industrial Foundation* test under section 552.101. *See Tex. Comptroller of Pub. Accounts*, 354 S.W.3d at 342 (Tex. 2010). The Supreme Court then considered the applicability of section 552.102, and held section 552.102(a) excepts from disclosure the dates of birth of state employees in the payroll database of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. *See id.* at 346. Upon review, we find none of the remaining information consists of information subject to section 552.102(a) of the Government Code, and none of the remaining information may be withheld on that basis.

Section 552.117(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that relates to the home address, home telephone number, emergency contact information, social security number of an employee or official of a governmental body, as well as information that reveals whether the person has family members. Gov't Code § 552.117(a)(1). Section 552.117(a)(2) of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure the home address, home telephone number, emergency contact information, and social security number of a peace officer, as well as information that reveals whether the peace officer has family members, regardless of whether the peace officer complies with sections 552.024 and 552.1175 of the Government Code. *See id.* § 552.117(a)(2). Section 552.117(a)(2) applies to peace officers as defined by article 2.12 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Upon review, we find none of the remaining information consists of the home address, home telephone number, emergency contact information, social security number, or family member information of an individual to whom section 552.117 applies. Accordingly, the city may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.117 of the Government Code.

Section 552.136 of the Government Code provides “[n]otwithstanding 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.” *Id.* § 552.136(b). An access device number is one that 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, and includes an account number. *See id.* § 552.136(a) (defining “access device”). You state the remaining information contains account numbers that are subject to section 552.136 of the Government Code. However, upon review, we find the remaining information does not contain any account numbers or any other information subject to section 552.136 of the Government Code. Accordingly, the city may not withhold any portion of the remaining information on the basis of section 552.136 of the Government Code.

Section 552.147 of the Government Code provides that “[t]he social security number of a living person is excepted from” required public disclosure under the Act. *Id.* § 552.147(a).

Therefore, the city may withhold the social security number we have marked in the remaining information under section 552.147(a) of the Government Code.³

We note some of the submitted information appears to be protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; see Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit.

In summary, the city must withhold the information we have marked pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The city may withhold the social security number we have marked under section 552.147(a) of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released; however, any information protected by copyright may only be released in accordance with copyright law.

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,



Sarah Casterline
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

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³We note section 552.147(b) of the Government Code authorizes a governmental body to redact a living person's social security number from public release without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office under the Act. Gov't Code § 552.147(b).

Ref: ID# 484789

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Ms. Judy E. Hopkins
Associate General Counsel
New York Life Insurance Company
51 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10010
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Mike Morgan
MetLife
9111 Salem Drive
Lubbock, Texas 79424
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Joel Suarez
ING
611 University, Suite 240
Lubbock, Texas 79401
(w/o enclosures)

Ms. Whitney E. Brady
Security Benefit
2740 North County Road West
Odessa, Texas 79764
(w/o enclosures)

Ms. Karen Gordon
ICMA RC
777 North Capitol Street, Northeast
Washington, D.C. 20002-4240
(w/o enclosures)