



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

May 2, 2014

Ms. Xochytl D. Greer  
Counsel for the City of League City  
Ross, Banks, May, Cron & Cavin, P.C.  
2 Riverway, Suite 700  
Houston, Texas 77056-1918

OR2014-07416

Dear Ms. Greer:

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# 521565 (League City Reference No. CSO# 14-041).

The City of League City (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for a copy of a specified memorandum. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.107 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.107(1) of the Government Code protects information coming within the attorney-client privilege. When asserting the attorney-client privilege, a governmental body has the burden of providing the necessary facts to demonstrate the elements of the privilege in order to withhold the information at issue. Open Records Decision No. 676 at 6-7 (2002). First, a governmental body must demonstrate the information constitutes or documents a communication. *Id.* at 7. Second, the communication must have been made "for the purpose of facilitating the rendition of professional legal services" to the client governmental body. TEX. R. EVID. 503(b)(1). The privilege does not apply when an attorney or representative is involved in some capacity other than that of providing or facilitating professional legal

services to the client governmental body. *In re Tex. Farmers Ins. Exch.*, 990 S.W.2d 337, 340 (Tex. App.—Texarkana 1999, orig. proceeding) (attorney-client privilege does not apply if attorney acting in a capacity other than that of attorney). Third, the privilege applies only to communications between or among clients, client representatives, lawyers, and lawyer representatives. TEX. R. EVID. 503(b)(1). Thus, a governmental body must inform this office of the identities and capacities of the individuals to whom each communication at issue has been made. Lastly, the attorney-client privilege applies only to a confidential communication, *id.*, meaning it was “not intended to be disclosed to third persons other than those to whom disclosure is made in furtherance of the rendition of professional legal services to the client or those reasonably necessary for the transmission of the communication.” *Id.* 503(a)(5).

Whether a communication meets this definition depends on the intent of the parties involved at the time the information was communicated. *Osborne v. Johnson*, 954 S.W.2d 180, 184 (Tex. App.—Waco 1997, orig. proceeding). Moreover, because the client may elect to waive the privilege at any time, a governmental body must explain the confidentiality of a communication has been maintained. Section 552.107(1) generally excepts an entire communication that is demonstrated to be protected by the attorney-client privilege unless otherwise waived by the governmental body. *See Huie v. DeShazo*, 922 S.W.2d 920, 923 (Tex. 1996) (privilege extends to entire communication, including facts contained therein).

You state the submitted information was intended to be confidential and was transmitted only between city officials, the City Attorney, and the members of the City Council. You state the submitted information was circulated among the city officials, the City Attorney, and the members of the City Council in order to discuss legal issues associated with a specified city ordinance, thus facilitating the rendition of legal services between the City Attorney and the client, the city. Based on your representations and our review, we find you have demonstrated the applicability of the attorney-client privilege to the submitted information. Accordingly, the city may withhold the submitted information under section 552.107 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup>

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.

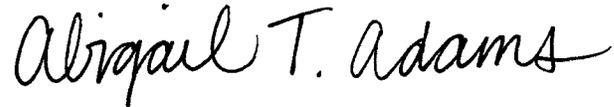
This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open\\_orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open_orl_ruling_info.shtml), or call the Office of the Attorney General’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for

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<sup>1</sup>As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure.

providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Abigail T. Adams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Abigail T. Adams  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

ATA/eb

Ref: ID# 521565

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)