



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

March 26, 2013

Mr. Frank J. Garza
Attorney for Brownsville Public Utility Board
Davidson, Troilo, Ream & Garza, P.C.
7550 West IH-10, Suite 800
San Antonio, Texas 78229-5815

OR2013-04910

Dear Mr. Garza:

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# 482129.

The Brownsville Public Utility Board (the "board"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to two named customers. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.133 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.133 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure a public power utility's information that is "reasonably related to a competitive matter." Gov't Code § 552.133(b). The Texas Legislature amended section 552.133, which now provides in relevant part:

(a) In this section, "public power utility" means an entity providing electric or gas utility services that is subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(a-1) For purposes of this section, "competitive matter" means a utility-related matter that is related to the public power utility's competitive activity, including commercial information, and would, if disclosed, give advantage to competitors or prospective competitors. The term:

(1) means a matter that is reasonably related to the following categories of information:

...

(F) customer billing, contract, and usage information, electric power pricing information, system load characteristics, and electric power marketing analyses and strategies[.]

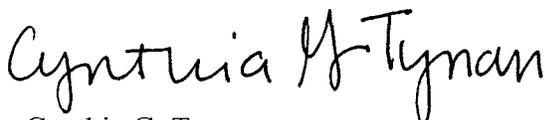
Id. § 552.133(a)-(a-1)(1)(F). We note section 552.133(a-1)(2) provides fifteen categories of information that are not competitive matters. *See id.* § 552.133(a-1)(2).

We understand the board is a municipally owned utility for purposes of section 552.133. You inform us the submitted information pertains to the board's customer billing and account information. You state release of the information at issue would give competitors an advantage. The information at issue is not among the fifteen categories of information expressly excluded from the definition of "competitive matter" by section 552.133(a-1)(2). Based on your assertions, we find the submitted information relates to a competitive matter as defined under the resolution. Thus, we conclude the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.133 of the Government Code and must be withheld from the requestor on this basis.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,



Cynthia G. Tynan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CGT/akg

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

Ref: ID# 482129

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)