



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

June 22, 2016

Ms. Beverly West
Legal Department
Galveston County
722 Moody Street, Fifth Floor
Galveston, Texas 77550

OR2016-14173

Dear Ms. West:

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# 615244.

The Galveston County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for all documents related to services, technology, and/or equipment acquired by the sheriff's office from five named vendors during a specified time period. You state you have released some information to the requestor. You state you do not have information responsive to a portion of the request.¹ Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Vigilant Solutions, Inc. ("Vigilant"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified Vigilant of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances). We have considered the submitted information.

We note an interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) of the Government Code to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public

¹The Act does not require a governmental body that receives a request for information to create information that did not exist when the request was received. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 563 at 8 (1990), 555 at 1-2(1990), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from Vigilant explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude Vigilant has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; 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 sheriff's office may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest Vigilant may have in the information. As you raise no exceptions to disclosure, the sheriff's office must release the submitted information.

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

Sincerely,



Ashley Crutchfield
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

AC/dls

Ref: ID# 615244

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party
(w/o enclosures)