



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
STATE OF ILLINOIS

Lisa Madigan  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

May 18, 2011

Ms. Heather Kruse  
Staff Attorney  
City of Des Plaines  
City Manager's Office  
Legal Division  
1420 Miner Street  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016

RE: Pre-Authorization Request – 2011 PAC 14166

Dear Ms. Kruse:

We have received and reviewed the written notice from the City of Des Plaines (City) of its intention to deny disclosure of certain information under section 7(1)(c) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c) (West 2009 Supp.), as amended by Public Act 96-1378, effective July 29, 2010). The City is seeking to redact dates of birth from the requested document.

On May 4, 2011, Jennifer Delgado submitted a FOIA request for all settlements pertaining to Matthew Hicks. In its written notice, the City asserts that dates of birth are exempt from disclosure under section 7(1)(c) of FOIA.

Section 7(1)(c) of FOIA exempts from inspection and copying "[p]ersonal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, unless the disclosure is consented to in writing by the individual subjects of the information." The exemption defines "unwarranted invasion of personal privacy" as "the disclosure of information that is highly personal or objectionable to a reasonable person and in which the subject's right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in obtaining the information." 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c) (West 2009 Supp.), as amended by Public Act 96-1378, effective July 29, 2010.

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### DETERMINATION

The City's use of the exemption in section 7(1)(c) for the dates of birth is **approved**: We have determined that the City has met its initial burden of demonstrating that the disclosure of dates of birth would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This type of information is highly personal by its very nature and the subject's right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in disclosing this information. *See, e.g., Oliva v. United States*, 756 F. Supp. 105, 107 (E.D.N.Y. 1991) (holding that, under Exemption 6 of the Federal Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. §552(b)(6)), "dates of birth[ ] are a private matter, particularly when coupled with \* \* \* other information" and "would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy"); *Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts v. Attorney General of Texas*, \_\_\_ S.W.3d \_\_\_, 54 Tex. Sup. Ct. J. 245 (2010) (state employees have a "nontrivial privacy interest" in their dates of birth under the Texas Public Information Act (*see* Tex. Gov't Code §§552.101, 552.102), which substantially outweighs the negligible public interest in disclosure).

Accordingly, the City may issue a partial denial letter and release the document with the dates of birth redacted, if it has not already done so.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (312) 814-6756. This correspondence shall serve to close this matter.

Very truly yours,

*STEVE SILVERMAN*  
STEVE SILVERMAN *by EK*  
Assistant Attorney General  
Public Access Bureau

cc: *Via Electronic Mail*  
Ms. Jennifer Delgado  
TribLocal Reporter  
*The Chicago Tribune*  
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