



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
STATE OF ILLINOIS

Lisa Madigan  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

May 6, 2011

Wendelwyn J. Briggs  
City Clerk/Freedom of Information Officer  
100 E. Phoenix Avenue  
P.O. Box 589  
Normal, IL 61761-0589

RE: FOIA Pre-Authorization Request - 2011 PAC 12093

Dear Ms. Briggs:

We have received and reviewed the written notice from the Town of Normal of its intention to deny certain information as exempt from disclosure 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 Town is seeking to redact a date of birth from the requested document.

██████████ submitted a FOIA request for a copy of the auto accident report described in her email dated January 21, 2011. In its written notice, the Town asserts that a date of birth is 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.

**DETERMINATION**

The Town's use of the exemption in section 7(1)(c) for the date of birth is **approved**. We have determined that the Town has met its initial burden to demonstrate that the disclosure of dates of birth would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

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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 Town may issue a partial denial letter and release the report with the date 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 by EK

STEVE SILVERMAN  
Assistant Attorney General  
Public Access Bureau

cc:



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