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26-ORD-079

March 10, 2026

In re: Jacob Garmon/City of Edmonton

Summary: The City of Edmonton (“the City”) did not violate the Open Records Act (“the Act”) when it denied a request for records that did not precisely describe the public records requested.

Open Records Decision

Jacob Garmon (“the Appellant”) submitted a request seeking “public records sufficient to identify, substantiate, and explain the legal and functional basis under which Edmonton State Bank serves in a fiduciary or fiduciary-like capacity to the City, including circumstances in which the Bank acts for the benefit of the City, exercises discretion over City funds, or is entrusted with duties requiring loyalty, prudence, or care.”¹ In response, the City denied the request under KRS 61.872(3)(b) because the Appellant had not adequately described the records sought. This appeal followed.

When a person requests copies of public records under the Act, “[t]he public agency shall mail copies of the public records to a person . . . after he or she precisely describes the public records which are readily available within the public agency.” KRS 61.872(3)(b). A description is precise “if it describes the records in definite, specific, and unequivocal terms.” 98-ORD-17 (internal quotation marks omitted). This standard may not be met when a request does not “describe records by type, origin, county, or any identifier other than relation to a subject.” 20-ORD-017 (quoting 13-ORD-077). Requests for any and all records “related to a broad and ill-defined topic” generally fail to precisely describe the records. 22-ORD-182; *see also* 21-ORD-034 (finding a request for any and all records relating to “change of duties,” “freedom of speech,” or “usage of signs” did not precisely describe the records); *but see Univ. of Ky. v. Kernel Press, Inc.*, 620 S.W.3d 43, 48 n.2 (Ky. 2021) (holding a request

¹ The Appellant also, “[w]ithout limiting the scope of this request,” provided descriptions of seven other subjects the records could relate to. Because these descriptions do not narrow the scope of the request, they are not listed here.

was proper when it sought “all records detailing [the] resignation” of a specific employee). A request that does not precisely describe the records “places an unreasonable burden on the agency to produce often incalculable numbers of widely dispersed and ill-defined public records.” 99-ORD-14.

The Appellant’s request has no temporal limitation. Moreover, the request is limited only to records “sufficient to identify, substantiate, and explain the legal and functional basis under which Edmonton State Bank serves in a fiduciary or fiduciary-like capacity to the City.” This vague topic is insufficiently specific to identify records that would be responsive to the request. Because the Appellant’s request does no more than describe records in relation to broad, vague subjects, without temporal limitation, it does not precisely describe the records sought. *See* 22-ORD-182. Accordingly, the City did not violate the Act by denying the Appellant’s request.

A party aggrieved by this decision may appeal it by initiating an action in the appropriate circuit court under KRS 61.880(5) and KRS 61.882 within 30 days from the date of this decision. Under KRS 61.880(3), the Attorney General shall be notified of any action in circuit court, but shall not be named as a party in that action or in any subsequent proceedings. The Attorney General will accept notice of the complaint emailed to OAGAppeals@ky.gov.

Russell Coleman
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/s/ Zachary M. Zimmerer
Zachary M. Zimmerer
Assistant Attorney General

#105

Distributed to:

Jacob Garmon, Appellant
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