

NORTH AUGUSTA

SOUTH CAROLINA'S RIVERFRONT

FOIA 2021-26

Date: March 24, 2021

TO: Lindsey Hodges
lhodges@aikenstandard.com

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Copy to:
Kelly Zier - City Attorney
Cammie Hayes – Chief Financial Officer
Ricky Jones – Manager of Information
Technology

PLEASE BE ADVISED that the City of North Augusta has received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request the 24th day of March 2021. Such request has been forwarded to the appropriate department for response. In addition, a copy of said request has been forwarded to the office of the City Attorney for his review.

The City Attorney will make a determination as to whether the request is a proper request under the FOIA act. The appropriate department will advise as to what materials, documents, etc. may be available. That department will also provide information indicating the approximate time involved related to the retrieval of the documentation, and also the amount of material that would need to be copied in order to comply with the request. At such time as a response is received from the City Attorney and the appropriate department, we will then notify you of the response of the City to your FOIA request. In the event that the request is deemed appropriate and permissible under the FOIA act, we will advise you of same and also provide an estimate of the costs that would be related to responding to said request. In the event that it is determined that the FOIA request is not proper and not permitted by the act, you'll also be advised of that decision.

A response to your request will be made within the time limits as established by section 20-4-30(c) of the FOIA act. Specifically, this requires that said response be provided within 10 business days for any record requested that is less than 24 months old. A request for a record that is more than 24 months old, is to be responded to within 20 business days from the date of the receipt of your request. The City would not normally require the full period in order to respond, but reserves its right under the act to do so.

The response as required by the Act as referred to in the above paragraph is NOT the delivery of the documents. It is a response advising the person making the FOIA request of the City's determination as to the public availability, of the requested public records. The ACT further provides that if the request is granted, the document must be furnished or made available for inspection or copying no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date on which the final determination as to the availability of the documents is made, unless the record are more than twenty-four (24) months old, in which case the Public Body is to provide such records no late than thirty-five (35) calendar days from the date on which the final determination was provided. In the event that a deposit for the costs of providing the documentation is required, the providing of the

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documents would be based upon the date on which the deposit is received. In such case, the time remains thirty (30) or thirty-five (35) calendar days based upon the age of the documents requested.

In the event that the response to your request is positive and the costs associated with retrieving and providing the data is minimal, in most cases, the City would forward the documentation to you with a statement for the costs. An example of charges would be 15¢ per page for black and white copies, 20¢ per page for color copies. The City does not charge for search and retrieval for fifteen minutes or less. For any time required to research and retrieve the requested information more than 15 minutes, the City charges, a minimum of \$8.00 per 30 minutes. Pursuant to the act, the charge for searching, retrieving, and redacting records is not to exceed the hourly wage of the lowest paid employee on the public body staff, who has the skill and training to fulfill the request. Therefore, the charge could be in excess of the \$8.00 per 30 minutes, if a regular clerical person is unable to perform the services. The specific FOIA Fee schedule, as adopted by the City is available for review online. In the event that the costs are considered to be of more than a nominal amount, the City would reserve the right to require a deposit of 25% of anticipated costs to be made before assembling, copying and delivering the materials. This would also provide to you the opportunity to determine if you desired to proceed with the request in light of the costs.

NOTICE: SOUTH CAROLINA LAW PROVIDES THAT "IT IS A CRIME TO KNOWINGLY OBTAIN OR USE PERSONAL INFORMATION FROM A PUBLIC BODY FOR COMMERCIAL SOLICITATION." Section 30-2-50



Sharon Lamar, City Clerk
City of North Augusta, South Carolina

Lamar, Sharon

From: Lindsey Hodges <lhodges@aikenstandard.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Lamar, Sharon
Subject: Freedom of Information Act request

March 24, 2021

City Clerk Sharon Lamar
PO Box 6400
North Augusta SC, 29861-6400

Hey Sharon, this is Lindsey Hodges with The Star.

This is a formal request under the S.C. Freedom of Information Act to inspect and/or copy certain documents related to Riverside Village and Project Jackson. Specifically:

1. We are seeking any financial documents for all Riverside Village expenses by the city from 2012 until now.
2. Any documents related to the collection and expenditure of funds related to local hospitality taxes, local accommodations taxes, tax increment revenue, parking revenue and stadium revenue.
3. Any documents related to payment of the Series 2017B Installment Purchase Revenue Bonds.
4. Any record of communications, including emails, phone calls and text messages, with anyone working for or representing Greenstone Properties from 2012 until now, including communications to and from both city employees and city council members.
5. Any communications, including emails, phone calls and text messages, with representatives of PIS QOZ Fund 2018-A or any Opportunity Fund operating related to Riverside Village from 2018 until now, including communications to and from both city employees and city council members.
6. Any documents related to or mentioning Project Jackson Financing Model scenario #90

We ask that you advise us before releasing the documents if you deem the costs to comply with this request to be more than \$25. The newspaper seeks these documents to help readers understand the use of taxpayer funds and the status of Riverside Village. The act allows release of such information without cost if such a release is in the public interest, and we ask that costs be waived as the documents requested relate directly to the use of taxpayer monies.

Please provide these documents in electronic form and on a rolling basis, as they become available.

If you choose to deny part of all of this request, please cite the exemption upon which you base that decision and a description of the information being withheld.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 803-644-2367. Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Hodges | Reporter
lhodges@aikenstandard.com
Newsroom: 803-644-2367
Cell: 864-993-6281

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