

THE TOWNSHIP OF DALLAS
RESOLUTION NO. 17 OF 2008

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF DALLAS ADOPTING
THE TERMS AND PROVISIONS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RIGHT-
TO-KNOW LAW (ACT 3 OF 2008) FOR IMPLEMENTATION
REGARDING ALL VALID REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION OF
ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC RECORDS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF DALLAS
BY BONA FIDE REQUESTERS**

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HEREBY RESOLVES, AS
FOLLOWS:**

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Dallas recognizes the importance of public records as the record of the township's actions and the repository of information about the township. The public has the right to access and procure copies of public records, with certain exceptions, subject to law, Board of Supervisors policy and administrative regulations; all in accordance with Act 3 of 2008, 65 P.S. ¶67.101 et seq. ("Pennsylvania's Right to Know Law").

I. DEFINITIONS:

Financial record – any account, voucher or contract dealing with the receipt of disbursement of funds or acquisition, use or disposal of services, supplies, materials, equipment or property; or the salary or other payments or expenses paid to an officer or employee, including the individual's name and title; and a financial audit report, excluding the audit's underlying work papers.

Public record – a record, including a financial record, that is not protected by a defined privilege or is not exempt from being disclosed under one of the exemptions in Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law or under other federal or state law or regulation, or judicial decree or order.

Record – information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, that documents a township transaction or activity and is created, received or retained pursuant to law or in connection with a township transaction, business or activity, including: a document, paper, letter, map, book, tape, photograph, film or sound recording, information stored or maintained electronically, and a data-processed or image-processed document.

Response – the township's notice informing a requester of a granting of access to a record or the township's written notice to a requester

granting, denying, or partially granting and partially denying access to a requested record.

Requester – a legal resident of the United States, or an agency, who requests access to a record.

II. **AUTHORITY:** The Board of Supervisors or any township employee duly authorized by the Board of Supervisors shall make the township's public records available for access and duplication to a requester, in accordance with law, Board of Supervisors policy, administrative regulations, and the provisions of the "Pennsylvania Right To Know Law", upon the condition that all of the terms and provisions set forth herein are fully complied with.

III. **DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY:**

(A) The Board of Supervisors shall designate an Open Records Officer, who shall be responsible to:

1. Receive written requests for access to records submitted to the township.
2. Review and respond to written requests in accordance with law, Board of Supervisors' policy, and administrative regulations.
3. Direct requests to other appropriate individuals in the township's employ or in another agency.
4. Track the township's progress in responding to requests.
5. Issue interim and final responses to submitted requests.
6. Maintain a log of all record requests and their disposition.
7. Ensure township staff are trained to perform assigned job functions relative to requests for access to records.

(B) Upon receiving a request for access to a record, the Open Records Officer shall:

1. Note the date of receipt on the written request.
2. Calculate and note on the written request the day on which the five-day period for response will expire.

3. Maintain an electronic or paper copy of the written request, including all documents submitted with the request, until the request has been fulfilled.

4. If the written request is denied, maintain the written request for thirty (30) days or, if an appeal is filed, until a final determination is issued or the appeal is deemed denied.

IV. **GUIDELINES:**

Requesters may access and procure copies of the public records of the township during the regular business hours of the Township administration offices.

A requester's right of access does not include the right to remove an original record from the control or supervision of the Open Records Officer.

The township shall not limit the number of records requested.

When responding to a request for access, the township is not required to create a record that does not exist or to compile, maintain, format or organize a record in a manner which the township does not currently use.

Information shall be made available to individuals with disabilities in an appropriate format, upon request and with sufficient advance notice.

The township shall post conspicuously at the administration office and on the township's web site, if the township maintains a web site, the following information:

1. Contact information regarding the Open Records Officer.
2. Contact information regarding the state's Office of Open Records and the website of the state's Office of Open Records or other applicable appeals officer.
3. The form to be used to file a request, with a notation that the Pennsylvania state Office of Open Records form may also be used, if the township decides to create its own form.
4. This Resolution of the Board of Supervisors and all administrative regulations and procedures governing requests for access to the township's public records.

(A) REQUEST FOR ACCESS

A written request for access to a public record shall be submitted on the required form(s) and addressed to the Open Records Officer.

Written requests may be submitted to the township in person, by mail, to a designated facsimile machine, or to a designated e-mail address.

Each request must include the following information:

1. Identification or description of the requested record in sufficient detail.
2. Medium in which the record is requested.
3. Name and address of the individual to receive the township's response.

The township shall not require an explanation of the reason for the request or the intended use of the requested record, unless otherwise required by law.

(B) FEES

Except for the duplication fee established by the state, the Board of Supervisors shall approve by appropriate ordinance a list of reasonable fees relative to requests for public records. The township shall maintain a list of applicable fees and disseminate the list to requesters and post a list of applicable fees conspicuously in the administration building.

No fee may be imposed for review of a record to determine whether the record is subject to access under law.

Prior to granting access, the township may require prepayment of estimated fees when the fees required to fulfill the request are expected to exceed \$100.

The Board of Supervisors may waive duplication fees when the requester duplicates the record or the Board of Supervisors deems it is in the public interest to do so.

(C) RESPONSE TO REQUEST

Township employees shall be directed to forward immediately requests for access to public records to the Open Records Officer.

Upon receipt of a written request for access to a record, the Open Records Officer shall determine if the requested record is a public record and if the township has possession, custody or control of that record.

The Open Records Officer shall respond as promptly as possible under the existing circumstances, and the initial response time shall not exceed five (5) business days from the date the written request is received by the Open Records Officer.

The initial response shall grant access to the requested record; deny access to the requested record; partially grant and partially deny access to the requested record; notify the requester of the need for an extension of time to fully respond; or request more detail from the requester to clearly identify the requested material.

If the township fails to respond to a request within five (5) business days of receipt, the request for access shall be deemed denied.

(D) Extension Of Time

If the Open Records Officer determines that an extension of time is required to respond to a request, in accordance with the factors stated in law, written notice shall be delivered to the requester within five (5) business days of receipt of the request. The notice shall indicate that the request for access is being reviewed, the reason that the review requires an extension, a reasonable date when the response is expected, and an estimate of applicable fees owed when the record becomes available.

Up to a thirty (30) day extension for one (1) of the above-listed reasons does not require the consent of the requester. If the response is not given by the specified date, it shall be deemed denied on the day following that date.

A requester may consent in writing to an extension of time that exceeds thirty (30) days, in which case the request shall be deemed denied on the day following the date specified in the notice if the Open Records Officer has not provided a response by that date.

(E) Granting Of Request

If the Open Records Officer determines that the request will be granted, the response shall inform the requester that access is granted and either include information on the regular business hours of the administration office, provide electronic access, or state where the requester may go to inspect the records or information electronically at a publically accessible site. The response shall include a copy of the fee schedule in effect, a statement that prepayment of fees is required in a specified amount if access to the records will cost in excess of \$100, and the medium in which the records will be provided.

A public record shall be provided to the requester in the medium requesting if it exists in that form; otherwise, it shall be provided in its existing medium. However, the township is not required to permit use of township computers.

The Open Records Officer may respond to a records request by notifying the requester that the record is available through publicly accessible electronic means or that the township shall provide access to inspect the record electronically. If the requester, within thirty (30) days following receipt of the township's notice, submits a written request to have the record converted to paper, the township's shall provide access in printed form within five (5) days of receipt of the request for conversion to paper.

A public record that the township does not possess, but is possessed by a third party with whom the township has contracted to perform a governmental function and which directly relates to that governmental function, shall be considered a public record of the township. When the township contracts with such a third party, the township shall require the contractor to agree in writing to comply with the requests for such records and to provide the township with the requested records in a timely manner to allow the township to comply with law.

If the Open Records Officer determines that a public record contains information both subject to and not subject to access, the Open Records Officer shall grant access to the information subject to access and deny access to the information not subject to access. The Open Records Officer shall redact from the record the information that is not subject to access. The Open Records Officer shall not deny access to a record if information is able to be redacted.

If the Open Records Officer responds to a requester that a copy of the requested record is available for delivery at the administration office and the

possible, a record's contents shall be made accessible even when the record is physically unavailable.

Information that is not subject to access and is redacted from a public record shall be deemed a denial.

If a written request for access to a record is denied or deemed denied, the requester may file an appeal with the state's Office of Open Records within fifteen (15) business days of the mailing date of the Open Records Officer's response or deemed denial.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS DULY ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF DALLAS AT A PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON THE 16 DAY OF DECEMBER, 2008.

ATTEST:

TOWNSHIP OF DALLAS

Nancy Ballas
BOARD SECRETARY

By:

Philip L. Walter
PHILIP L. WALTER
CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS