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Teig v. Chavez

Supreme Court of Iowa - June 7, 2024 - N.W.3d - 2024 WL 2869282

Citizen filed suit against city, seeking production of records he had requested under the Open Records Act, statutory damages, and declaratory and injunctive relief.

The District Court granted city's motion for summary judgment and denied citizen's motion for additional discovery. Citizen appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Citizen was not entitled to additional discovery after city had responded to more than 30 interrogatories;
- Applications from external job candidates were exempt from disclosure, but not applications submitted by then-current employees of the city;
- Legal opinion about whether the city council could review applications in a closed session was protected by attorney-client privilege and not subject to disclosure;
- City could recover the expense of searching and retrieving documents requested by citizen;
- City did not unreasonably delay responding to citizen's requests for documents related to requests by candidates to "close the interviews," city attorney job posting, or communications from city attorney to employees regarding citizen's litigation;
- Citizen was entitled to seek relief for city's 90-day delay in responding to his request for production of legal invoices;
- Citizen was entitled to costs and attorney fees related to his request for job applications from internal candidates, but not for damages for city's failure to produce the requested records or injunctive relief; and
- City was responsible for paying citizen's costs and reasonable attorney fees.