

ATASCOSA COUNTY JUDGES REPORT

I would like to discuss open records requests with you today.

I want to start by saying I have no problem with a realistic open records request. But, many so-called political activists think they strike terror into our hearts when they demand an “open records request.” But sadly, they rarely know the law about what they are doing. Recently, we had someone request “ALL” records related to a matter covering the counties “ENTIRE” history. What these unknowing natterers like this one fail to realize is that their request is so broad they can wind up owing several thousand dollars for the information. We can charge \$.50 per copy and \$15.00 per hour for labor costs. This request is so broad it could easily cost up to \$6K. Our County Attorney is handling this, and we are proceeding on a calm, level and legal plane.

This same person looked me up on the State website and found my name on a private 501c3, which would not be unusual at all, and decided I should fork over the records. My answer was “you do not live in Atascosa County, nor have you ever contributed to that 501c3, and I am not legally required – so no records.” Unless a 501c3 has received tax revenue dollars, it is not required to conform to the Texas Open Records Act.

Now that person is posting on Facebook that I am delinquent (and worse names) on providing the records. It is both defamatory and libelous to do that, I think, but I am choosing to ignore it. Well, except for this column. It does prove that some people need to study their knowledge to make sure of what they are doing.

I certainly learned long ago I was not as smart as I thought I was, and each year I find more that I did not know. Becoming more humble has been increasingly easier with each year I age.

Quote: “The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits.” – Albert Einstein.

Thank you for listening. We want you to be proud of your county government.