

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

In the Matter of a Complaint by  
Russell D. Crane, Sr.

FINAL DECISION

Complainant

Docket #FIC84-57

against

July 25, 1984

Mayor, Town of East Hartford

Respondent

The above captioned matter was heard as a contested case on June 18, 1984 at which time the complainant and the respondent appeared and presented testimony, exhibits and argument on the complaint.

After consideration of the entire record the following facts are found:

1. The respondent is a public agency within the meaning of §1-18a(a), G.S.

2. By letter dated March 29, 1984 the complainant made a request of the respondent for information regarding "how much money your administration has spent in the East Hartford Gazette, . . . [h]ow many tax dollars were spent for legal ads and other advertisements in the last four years, and how much was spent four years prior to you becoming Mayor."

3. By letter of complaint filed with the Commission on April 10, 1984 the complainant alleged that the respondent had failed to respond to his March 29, 1984 request.

4. Upon receiving notification of the complainant's complaint the respondent, by letter dated April 25, 1984, indicated that in order to comply with the complainant's request the respondent would have to compile information from "innumerable" documents, there being in the respondent's possession no document containing the information sought by the complainant.

5. It is found that the information sought by the complainant may be retrieved from computer printouts referred to as "reports of budget standing," in conjunction with detailed printouts for each line item in a department's budget. The reports of budget standing are created on a monthly basis for each of the approximately 30 departments in the town of East Hartford.

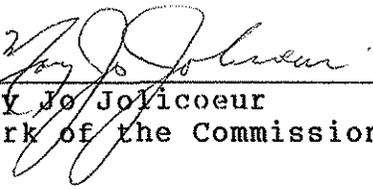
6. The printouts referred to in paragraph 5, above, are available for public inspection.

7. It is found that to satisfy the complainant's request for records the respondent would have had to have created a document, which under the Freedom of Information Act it is not required to do. However, had the respondent indicated to the complainant in a timely manner that the requested information did not exist in any form which would have been meaningful to the complainant a complaint and a hearing before this Commission might well have been avoided. The respondent's failure to respond to the complainant's request in any way prior to the filing of the complainant's complaint served neither the interests of the complainant nor of the town of East Hartford.

The following order by the Commission is hereby recommended on the basis of the record concerning the above captioned complaint:

1. The complaint is hereby dismissed.

Approved by order of the Freedom of Information Commission at its regular meeting of July 25, 1984.

  
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Mary Jo Jolicœur  
Clerk of the Commission