July 29, 2014

Mr. Paul Joseph Harcz, Jr.

E-mail: joeharcz@comcast.net

1365 E. Mt. Morris Rd.

Mt. Morris, MI 48458

Re: FOIA Response to Request for Information on Opportunities Unlimited for Blind Inc. Payment

Dear Mr. Harcz, Jr.:

This email is in response to your July 18, 2014, email request for information, received by this office on July 21, 2014. Please be advised that the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) is processing this request under the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), MCL 15.231 *et seq*.

You have requested information as described in your email (which is also below) as:

““Payments to OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED FOR BLIND INC by LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS for fiscal year 2014

Table with 4 columns and 2 rows

Agency Name LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Category Description Contractual Services Supplies and Materials

Warrant Date 6/27/2014

Payments Total $500.00”

Your request is granted as to existing, nonexempt documents pertaining to your request. In regards to your questions, it is not the purpose of the FOIA to permit persons to secure, from a public body, answers to questions, see MCL 15.232, Section 2(h). We estimate that the time to process this request is 3 hours. Section 4(1) of the FOIA, MCL 15.234(1), provides that a public body may charge a fee for public record

FOIA Response – P.J. Harcz, Jr.

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search, including the mailing costs, the cost of duplication or publication including labor, the cost of search, examination, review, and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information.

Please note that nothing within the federal American with Disabilities Act (ADA ), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (RA), as amended, or the state’s FOIA (MCL 15.231 et seq.) requires a public body to process FOIA requests free of charge. Further, while the ADA and Section 504 of the RA may mandate that, upon request, material be produced in an accessible format without charge, neither the ADA or Section 504 of the RA preclude a public body from charging costs under the state’s FOIA. Thusly, please note that no labor fee charges have been, or will be, assessed to convert existing, nonexempt public records responsive to your requests into an accessible format to forward to you.

In order to complete the processing of your request, and based on the hourly wages and benefits of the lowest paid Department employee capable of performing the necessary tasks to process your request, we are requesting a deposit of $47.05 in order to begin the processing of this request. An invoice is attached that outlines the costs.

Once payment is received for the deposit, we will start the processing of your request. Once the process is complete, we will request payment for the additional amount of the actual cost of the request. When we receive this payment, we will send the information either to you via email or to you in the U.S. Mail on a USB flash drive (depending on the amount of material responsive to your request).

Sincerely,

Carla Miller Haynes, FOIA Coordinator

Bureau of Services for Blind Persons

Attachments - 2: Invoice & Email Request for Information

cc: Edward F. Rodgers II

Sue Luzenski

Mike Pemble

Katie Belknap

Leamon Jones

Diamalyn Gaston

Rob Essenberg

DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR BLIND PERSONS

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT INVOICE

NAME AND ADDRESS OF REQUESTER:

Mr. Paul Joseph Harcz, Jr.

E-mail: joeharcz@comcast.net

1365 E. Mt. Morris Rd.

Mt. Morris, MI 48458

REQUEST RECEIVED: July 21, 2014

TYPE OF REQUEST: Email

REQUEST PARTIALLY DENIED: No

EXEMPT INFORMATION WITHHELD/REDACTED: To be determined

EXTENDED RESPONSE NOTICE ISSUED: No

REQUESTED INFORMATION WILL BE: Emailed/Invoiced For Payment

ACCOUNT CODE: Index: 36200 PCA: 11343

DLARA CONTACT: Melvin Farmer, Central FOIA Coordinator

(517) 373-0194, Ottawa Building, 4th Floor, 611 W. Ottawa, Lansing, MI 48909

The FOIA provides that the department may charge a fee to comply with requests for public records. The processing fee is composed of hourly wages and benefit costs of the lowest paid employee(s) capable of processing the request; the duplication of records at assessed costs per page; mailing costs; and other related special costs. Prior to searching and copying requested records, the department may request full payment or 50% of the estimated costs exceeding $50.00 with the balance required before mailing the records. Assessed costs are related to your request for:

“Payments to OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED FOR BLIND INC by LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS for fiscal year 2014

Table with 4 columns and 2 rows

Agency Name - LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Category Description - Contractual Services Supplies and Materials

Warrant Date - 6/27/2014

Payments Total - $500.00”

INVOICE CALCULATIONS

LABOR

Locating and Duplicating Cost:

Number of Hours: 2.5 hrs. x Hourly Rate: $31.37 = Amount: $78.43

Examining and Extracting Cost:

Number of Hours: ½ hr. x Hourly Rate: $31.37 = Amount: $15.68

TOTAL LABOR: $94.11

POSTAGE (estimate): To be determined based on the amount of information

DUPLICATING: Number of Pages (0) times Copying Rate of $0

OTHER (overtime, audio tapes, discs, photos, security, etc.): $0

SUBTOTAL: $94.11

Less waived indigency fee under FOIA Act MCL 15.234 Section 4(1)

INVOICE TOTAL: $94.11

DEPOSIT\* $47.05

BALANCE TO BE PAID\*: $47.06

Make check or money order payable to: STATE OF MICHIGAN

Remit to: Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

Office Services Mailroom

7150 Harris Drive, PO Box 30015

Lansing, MI 48909

RETURN ORIGINAL COPY OF THIS INVOICE WITH YOUR PAYMENT

\*Please note that if a deposit is requested, the indicated amount is an estimate of the cost of complying with your request. The actual cost may vary somewhat from this amount.

From: joe harcz Comcast <joeharcz@comcast.net>

Sent: Friday, July 18, 2014 1:47 PM

To: Rodgers, Edward (LARA)

Cc: Pemble, Mike (LARA); nfbmi-talk@nfbnet.org;

Christyne.Cavataio@ed.gov; BRIAN SABOURIN; Marlene Malloy MCRS

Dir.

Subject: small but not incedental

July 18 2014 OUB Payments

Paul Joseph Harcz, Jr.

joeharcz@comcast.net

To:

Edward Rodgers, Bureau Services to Blind Persons

Dear Sir,

I’m kind of wondering here what the following expenditure is all about:

“Payments to OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED FOR BLIND INC by LICENSING AND

REGULATORY AFFAIRS for fiscal year 2014

Table with 4 columns and 2 rows

Agency Name

Category Description

Warrant Date

Payments Total

LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Contractual Services Supplies and Materials

6/27/2014”

$500.00

Now this is one of many expenditures of BSBP for things not accountable and it is rather odd that Mr. Essen berg, a highly paid civil service employee is on the Board of OUB and that might appear to be a conflict of interest in anyone’s schema. Regardless it is also odd that I keep seeing even numbered expenditures over and over again related to BSBP.

More odd is you folks never put on your own web site the programs which these expenditures large and small represent. (I.E. this is normally for a youth transition program or is it? Who knows? For you don’t even put these programs on BSBP’s web site or otherwise diseminate what the heck you all do to the public.

Who well to paraphrase a politician from the past, “$500 (unaccountable funds) here and a million there and pretty soon we’re talking about real money.

Regardless sir it is long since time for you to account for and explain expenditures from BSBP; to disclose known conflicts of interests; and to come clean with taxpayers and consumers alike.

This thing of course is only the tip of the iceberg and very incidental but goes to a pattern and practice. In fact it goes to major misappropriations of federal and state public funds which are nothing short of bribes in my not so humble opinion to various entities of which OUB is just a proverbial pimple upon the elephant’s posterior in the large scheme of things.

Regardless one must answer these things if one is to live up to Governor Snyder’s purported open and accountable, metric driven mission and all that, don’t you think?

Or are we people who are blind just supposed to sit back and take it all and then get a few crumbs handed out here and there which is not accounted for while you and the Administration take the real money and programs from us while you fiddle about at the public trough without even a modicum of public accountability?

Sorry if I use “big words” here Mr. Rodgers et al, but you claim to be educated and accountable public servants.

Cordially,

Paul Joseph Harcz, Jr.