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STATE OF MARYLAND
PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT COMPLIANCE BOARD

PIACB 24-38
February 8, 2024
Washington County, Custodian
Ken Buckler, Complainant

In July 2023, Ken Buckler, the complainant, sent a Public Information Act (“PIA”) request to Washington County (“County”) asking for records related to a 2022 cybersecurity incident, including “data which was unencrypted or encrypted, and relating to information about Washington County residents, properties, and businesses.” The County denied the request, citing § 4-351(a)(1) of the PIA¹ and explaining that the investigation into the incident was ongoing.

The complainant disputed the County’s response and thus contacted the Public Access Ombudsman for assistance. After the Ombudsman issued a final determination stating that the dispute was not resolved, the complainant filed this complaint with our Board. In response, the County defends its denial and argues that numerous exemptions apply. The County also attaches a document, dated January 8, 2024, entitled “Notice of Data Event.” This notice provides general information about the cybersecurity incident, its impact, and what the County has done about it.

After receiving the County’s response, the complainant indicated that the “Notice of Data Event” contained the data he was seeking. He advises that “the attached notice is sufficient to withdraw and/or close [his] complaint as resolved.” Given these circumstances, we dismiss this complaint. *See* COMAR 14.02.02.07.

Public Information Act Compliance Board

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¹ *See* Md. Code Ann., Gen. Provisions §§ 4-101 through 4-601.