

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

FILED

NOV 20 2024

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
E. ST. LOUIS OFFICE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
vs.)
)
ANSON FENTON,)
)
Defendants.)

CRIMINAL NO. 24-30154-SPM

Title 18, United States Code,
Section 666.

INDICTMENT

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

At all times relevant to this indictment, unless otherwise stated:

Background and Relevant Parties

1. Wayne City, Illinois, is a village located in Wayne County, in the Southern District of Illinois.

2. ANSON FENTON was employed as the Wayne City Police Chief. In that capacity, FENTON was responsible to supervise and administer all activities of the police department. Among other duties, he was responsible to safeguard, document, and preserve property within the care, custody, and control of the Wayne City Police Department – including property that the village received through asset forfeiture proceedings.

3. Asset forfeiture is a legal process to confiscate the instrumentalities or proceeds of a crime. Asset forfeiture can apply to a broad range of property, including money, vehicles, real estate, and other assets linked to certain criminal activities.

4. The Wayne County States Attorney’s Office routinely used asset forfeiture proceedings against individuals who were charged with crimes. It was common for criminal

defendants to agree to relinquish their title and ownership in certain property as part of the plea negotiation process. In that circumstance, a Wayne County judge would enter a court order forfeiting identified property to municipalities or other appropriate government entities.

5. When asset forfeiture was used to transfer the ownership of property to Wayne City, the property would be received and held by the city until after the Wayne City Board of Trustees passed an ordinance authorizing the sale of the property.

6. **ANSON FENTON** was obligated to safeguard and use government property for the public good, but instead he abused his position by misapplying and misusing property forfeited to Wayne City for his own personal benefit and enrichment.

COUNT 1
MISAPPLICATION OF PROPERTY FROM FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS
18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(1)(A)

1. Paragraphs 1-6 are incorporated by reference.

2. Wayne City was an organization or agency of state or local government within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(1).

3. During a one-year period beginning on September 1, 2022, and continuing through August 31, 2023, Wayne City received more than \$10,000 in benefits and assistance from the United States government under a federal program involving a grant, contract, subsidy, loan, guarantee, insurance, and other form of federal assistance.

4. **ANSON FENTON** was an employee of Wayne City and was its “agent” within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. § 666(d)(1).

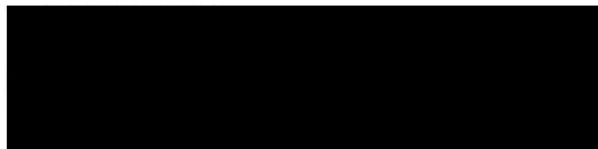
5. In the period of twelve consecutive months between September 1, 2022, and August 31, 2023, in Wayne County, in the Southern District of Illinois, the defendant, **ANSON FENTON**, knowingly embezzled, stole, converted, obtained by fraud, and misapplied forfeited property worth

more than \$5,000 that was owned by and under the care, custody, and control of Wayne City, including: a 2017 Harley-Davidson motorcycle, VIN# 1HD1KRC1XHB68035 that he sold; a 2022 Suzuki Hayabusa motorcycle with VIN# JS1EJ11B5N7100872 that he traded for a 1991 Ford Mustang; and a 2000 Harley-Davidson motorcycle (VIN# 1HD1BMY14YY032481) that he sold. 680835 PW 11-14-24

All in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(1)(A).

COUNT 2
INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION OF STOLEN PROPERTY
18 U.S.C. § 2314

On or about July 12, 2023, in the Southern District of Illinois, the defendant, ANSON FENTON, did unlawfully transport, transmit, and transfer in interstate commerce from Wayne City, State of Illinois, to Alexandria, State of Virginia, stolen goods, wares and merchandise, that is, a 2022 Suzuki Hayabusa motorcycle with VIN# JS1EJ11B5N7100872, valued at \$5,000 or more, knowing the same to have been stolen, converted, and taken by fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2314.



FOREPERSON

Handwritten signature of Steven D. Weinhoeft in blue ink.

STEVEN D. WEINHOEFT
Assistant United States Attorney

Handwritten signature of Rachelle Aud Crowe in blue ink.

RACHELLE AUD CROWE
United States Attorney

Recommended Bond: Unsecured