



CASE MANAGEMENT HISTORY

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AGENT: Austin Mills
SUPERVISOR: Lt. Daren Vaughn
COUNTY: Spartanburg

CASE NUMBER: 2024-03590
VICTIM: Society/Public
SUBJECT: Wright, Charles - Sheriff

DATE	ACTION TAKEN
9/13/24	Briefed on allegations and discussed case strategy. Reviewed credit card statements.
9/16/24	Reviewed credit card statements.
9/17/24	Reviewed credit card statements
10/7/24	Met with FBI to discuss the allegations, current intelligence, and case strategy.
11/12/24	Conference call with FBI to discuss updates and plan an interview.
11/22/24	Interviewed Sheriff Wright along with FBI S/A Newsome. Wright stated that any credit card usage for personal gain was accidental. Wright said to speak with Lisa Estes who was an assistant to the SCSO Administrative Captain.
11/25/24	Worked on MOI.
11/26/24	Worked on MOI.
1/7/24	Phone call with S/A Newsome to plan an interview of Estes.
1/14/25	Discussed interview strategy with S/A Newsome. Scheduled interview with Estes.
1/15/25	Interviewed Lisa Estes along with S/A Newsome. Estes said that she did not make approvals for spending and that she submitted payments for approval which were then signed off on by an Administrative Lt and Capt before being reviewed and approved by multiple people in the Spartanburg County Finance Office.
1/21/25	Spoke with S/A Newsome regarding new information and discussed future case strategy. Newsome stated that he would be unavailable for the next few weeks due to travel and training. Tentative plans were made to interview additional witnesses.
2/11/25	S/A Mills and FBI S/A Newsome interviewed retired SCSO Admin Lt Mike Creek. S/A Mills briefed Captain Kindley on case status and discussed case strategy.
2/12/25	S/A Mills scheduled interview with retired SCSO Admin Captain Mark Barry for 2/14/25.
2/13/25	S/A Mills was advised that Spartanburg County Councilman David Britt and County Administrator Cole Alverson had reached out to Solicitor Barnette and SLED with concerns regarding Sheriff Wright and LB Watson. S/A Mills scheduled Britt and Alverson for interviews on 2/14/25.
2/14/25	S/A Mills and S/A Newsome interviewed Britt and Alverson. Each recounted meetings they had with Wright following the Post & Courier reporting on his credit card spending. Wright said that he had mistakenly made personal purchases and would repay the cost of them. Alverson told Wright to provide a list of charges that were personal expenses. Wright had not provided a list but had written a \$1,100 check for reimbursement and attached it to one month's credit card statement. Britt and Alverson advised that the Post & Courier had submitted FOIA requests regarding LB Watson and a tip had been made on an employee hotline advising that Watson did not work. Britt and Alverson requested documentation of Watson's work from Wright. Wright said that he would get the documentation but later advised Britt that there was none. Wright told Britt that Watson was his mother's fourth cousin. Alverson had not been able to locate records of Watson having radio traffic with dispatch and was advised by Lt Floyd, Watson's supervisor, that Watson did not work. Chief

	Deputy Paris was asked for records regarding Watson and declined to provide them due to a “conflict of interest”. Britt said that Wright signed Watson’s employment agreement in January of 2005. Conference call with FBI to discuss case updates and strategy. S/A Mills, S/A Newsome, and S/A Erin Carlisle interviewed Mark Barry. Wright did not typically provide receipts for credit card purchases other than when specifically told to do so. Barry expressed concerns about Wright’s credit card purchases to Chief Deputy Paris. Barry only recalled the Apple purchases standing out as suspicious. LB Watson was classified as a code enforcement officer but was not a certified officer and was not supposed to carry a gun but had done so. Watson had served papers in the past, but Lt Floyd notified Barry in approximately 2022 or 2023 that Watson was not working. Barry advised Paris of Watson not working. Watson was issued a county vehicle. Records of Watson serving papers would be in the Spillman report management system. Dawn Hill and Allison Miller sat in the same area as Watson’s desk and could report on how often they saw Watson. Hill and Watson previously dated. Spoke with SCSO Lt Todd Floyd by telephone. He agreed to an interview on 2/19/25.
2/17/25	S/A Mills: Received a call from Lt Floyd. He stated that Mark Barry had lunch with a group of people on 2/17/25 during which he told them that he had spoken with the FBI and SLED about Sheriff Wright. Floyd was concerned that this information would be spread amongst the SCSO employees and cause Wright to be paranoid. Floyd began supervising Watson in 2019. Danny Shields was previously Watson’s supervisor. Watson did some work until approximately 2021. Watson then claimed that he was working for Wright. Watson was Wright’s cousin. Floyd told his supervisors (Mike Creek, Mark Barry, and Brandon McGill) that Watson was not working and believed that they told Chief Deputy Paris. Paris told Floyd that he knew Watson was not working. Watson had long hair which was against SCSO policy. Watson could barely read and was not issued a laptop. Dawn Hill and Allison Miller could comment on how often Watson was at his desk and served papers. Floyd thought that Watson, Paris, and Amos Durham would talk if questioned and thought that S/A Mills should also speak with former SCSO Captain Steve Cooper and current SCSO employee Kevin Bobo. Floyd said that he would still speak with S/A Mills in person.
2/18/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs. Scheduled Dawn Cheves for an interview on 2/19/25.
2/19/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs. Interviewed Dawn Cheves (along with S/A Carlisle). Cheves previously dated Watson and had worked in the civil division since August of 2024. During her time in civil, she had never known Watson to be assigned or to have served civil papers. From her time dating Watson, she knew that he ran a grading business and appeared to do minimal, if any work, for there sheriff’s office. She knew that Watson and Sheriff Wright were cousins and were close. During her time dating Watson she witnessed Watson and Sheriff Wright meet up on multiple occasions for, as she was told by Watson, Watson to loan Sheriff Wright money. On multiple occasions she witnessed Sheriff Wright go to Watson’s desk and remove an envelope with unknown contents. After Watson learned that Cheves was working in civil in January of 2025, he became angry and went to Sheriff Wright. Sheriff Wright initially tried to relocate Cheves before reconsidering. Cheves believed that her job was in jeopardy and was told by a coworker that their entire chain of command would be fired if Cheves went to human resources regarding the issues.

2/20/25dkv	Captain Kindley, Lt. Vaughn, S/A Mills and S/A Grigg met to discuss the progress of the investigation.
2/21/25	S/A Mills: Interviewed Chaplain Amos Durham (along with S/A Carlisle). Durham provided details of how the Chaplain's Fund operated. Durham never gave out cash, only checks or direct payments. Sheriff Wright sometimes delivered checks for Durham. Sheriff Wright had never borrowed from the fund or asked for reimbursement for anything. Durham and Sheriff Wright spoke almost daily. Interviewed Lt. Floyd (along with S/A Carlisle). Floyd recounted information provided on 2/17/25 and provided additional details. Floyd advised that Cheves was demoted on 2/20/24 and turned in a resignation letter on 2/21/25. On four occasions he witnessed Sheriff Wright go to Watson's desk and remove an envelope with unknown contents, on one of those times Sheriff Wright said that Watson sometimes left him candy. Floyd was certain that Watson had not served any papers since 2021. Floyd knew that Watson was Sheriff Wright's cousin. Floyd advised his chain of command that Watson was not working and believed that they told Chief Deputy Parris. Floyd was told to continue completing Watson's timecards.
2/24/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs. Checked with S/A Carlisle on the status of subpoenas. All had been sent. Mills and Carlisle agreed that it would be best to have Spillman and other SCSO records regarding Watson prior to interviewing Chief Deputy Parris. S/A Carlisle expected subpoena results by the end of the week. <i>Agent's Note: On 3/4/25, S/A Mills clarified with S/A Carlisle that she had sent requests to the AUSA for subpoenas on 2/20/25, the subpoenas were not received until 2/26/25.</i>
2/25/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
2/26/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
2/27/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
2/28/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs. Spoke with S/A Carlisle regarding status of subpoenas and other steps to take. No subpoena returns were available yet. Carlisle expected results from SCSO regarding Watson by the middle of next week. Agents agreed that confirmation was needed, but if the phone previously issued to Watson was property of Spartanburg County, then consent could be obtained for a forensic extraction of it. Also discussed the possibility of iCloud search warrants. S/A Carlisle advised that she would attempt to identify accounts for Wright and Watson.
3/3/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
3/4/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs. Spoke with FBI S/A Carlisle and clarified that she requested subpoenas from the AUSA on 2/20/25 and received the subpoenas on 2/26/25. She served subpoenas to AT&T (Watson phone records) on 2/28/25, United Community Bank on 2/27/25 (Watson financial records), a physician on 2/27/25, and Spartanburg County* (Watson records) on 2/27/25. *Late in the evening of 2/28/25, Spartanburg County attorney John Harris called S/A Carlisle and advised that the subpoena needed to be served directly to the SCSO and additional subpoenas for the county's database records (distinct from SCSO databases) on Watson would be needed. S/A Carlisle served the subpoena to SCSO (Lt. David Littleton) on 3/3/25. Amanda Wilson called S/A Carlisle regarding the subpoena on 3/3/25. Wilson was actively preparing the documents requested. S/A Carlisle requested an additional, county database specific, subpoena on 2/28/25 and had not received it yet.

	S/A Carlisle and S/A Mills planned to speak again around noon on 3/5/25.
03/04/2025jk	<i>Agent will contact Chief Deputy Parris and set up an interview this week. Agent will brief Capt Kindley with progress on this investigation daily.</i>
3/5/25	S/A Mills: (approximately 10:00 AM) Notified S/A Carlisle that S/A Mills was ordered to interview Chief Deputy Parris on 3/5/25. Spoke with S/A Newsome. Newsome advised that the FBI would wait to interview Chief Deputy Parris after receiving the return from an outstanding subpoena to the SCSO for records pertaining to Watson given that the records would be useful for conducting the interview. S/A Newsome understood the situation and expressed a desire to continue the investigation alongside SLED. S/A Mills: (approximately 2:00 PM) Had a conference call with FBI S/A Newsome, S/A Carlisle, and AUSA Lothrop. Lothrop advised that if agents could provide a list of 3-4 individuals to subpoena to appear before a grand jury, they could be subpoenaed for a Grand Jury in Columbia on 3/18/25. All agents agreed that was the best option for obtaining truthful statements from Chief Deputy Parris and could also be used to lock-in statements from other witnesses. S/A Mills advised Lothrop that this course of action would have to be approved by SLED executive management and Lothrop said that he would coordinate with the appropriate parties. S/A Newsome said that he would reach out to his supervision and Capt. Kindley. S/A Mills briefed Capt. Kindley on the aforementioned conference call by telephone.
3/6/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs. S/A Mills and Grigg interviewed a complainant regarding potential financial fraud who was referred to SLED by Sheriff Wright. Information provided was not indicative of a crime or related to this investigation.
3/7/25	S/A Mills: Coordinated with S/A Carlisle and provided recordings of previous interviews that were requested by the AUSA for transcription. S/A Carlisle advised that expedited GJS requests were submitted to the AUSA on 3/7/25. GJS expected to be served between 3/10/25 and 3/12/25. S/A Carlisle stated she would advise S/A Mills as soon as the GJS were received and ready to be served. Worked on MOIs.
3/10/25	S/A Mills: Spoke with S/A Newsome. GJS results were received from the SCSO. Agents made tentative plans to interview Chief Deputy Parris on 3/11/25 and serve him with a GJS.
3/11/25	S/A Mills: Case review with Major Robertson. Notified Lt. Floyd of GJS. Conducted an interview of Chief Deputy Parris along with S/A Newsom and S/A Carlisle. Chief Deputy Parris said that he had no oversight of Sheriff Wright's credit card and no awareness of his spending habits prior to the Post & Courier article. Watson was Sheriff Wright's cousin and worked in the civil division. Watson served papers in the past but had not done so in several years. Chief Deputy Parris did not recall his subordinates notifying him that Watson was not working. Chief Deputy Parris suspected that Sheriff Wright was addicted to pain pills based on his observed behavior and appearance as well as stories Chief Deputy Parris had heard. Sheriff Wright asked Chief Deputy Parris for pain pills before. Multiple

	people told Chief Deputy Parris that Sheriff Wright had asked them for pain pills. Chief Deputy Parris was served a GJS.
3/13/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
3/14/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
3/17/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
3/18/25	S/A Mills: Attended federal grand jury in Columbia. Spoke with AUSA Justin Holloway about the direction of the case. Holloway believed there would be federal indictments.
3/19/25	S/A Mills: S/A Mills and S/A Carlisle interviewed Amanda Wilson at the FBI Greenville office. Spillman records for Watson serving papers should be ready by 4/1/25.
3/20/25	S/A Mills: Briefed Solicitor Barnette on the case. Solicitor advised that the elements of 8-13-700 (Use of official position or office for financial gain; disclosure of potential conflict of interest) appeared to be present. Solicitor Barnette advised that he would request the AG's office or another Solicitor to prosecute the case as soon as he was advised that the SLED investigation was concluded due to the conflict of interest.
3/21/25	S/A Mills: Conducted three interviews along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Vicki Biggs, former assistant to Sheriff Wright. Wright had two cell phones. Biggs would not have been comfortable asking Wright about his credit card spending. Wright was uninvolved in the SCSO in recent years. Biggs saw LB Watson approximately three times per years, he worked in the civil division and was related to Wright. Watson was rumored to work another job during his scheduled SCSO working hours. Biggs had surgery in 2016, and Wright came to visit her afterward. Wright asked for muscle relaxers during that visit and Biggs gave him approximately four pills. Wright made a comment to the effect of, don't tell his wife because he didn't want her to think that he was getting hooked. Biggs called the pharmacy on behalf of Wright multiple times in order to have prescriptions refilled for Wright. Chief Deputy Parris told Biggs that he provided Wright with pills one time. Wright had a cousin named Rodney who had a motorcycle wreck and Wright helped to "rehab" him afterwards. April Davis worked in records at the SCSO and had a cousin who knew who supplied Wright with pills. Biggs used to collect money, including cash, from donors which she then gave to Amos Durham for the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund. Bigg gave receipts to the donors. Biggs kept letters regarding SCSO retirees being permitted to keep their duty pistols in her file cabinet which Amanda Wilson should now have. Duncan PD Chief Greg Satterfield, former SCSO Patrol Captain. Satterfield became the SCSO patrol captain in 2021. Sometime after his promotion, Wright asked him for "pain pills". Satterfield did not have any. Wright later told Satterfield that he had meant Tylenol. In the summer of 2021, Satterfield was approached by Drew Crisp who claimed to have a video of Wright buying pills. Satterfield notified Chief Deputy Parris and SLED Capt. Kindley. Satterfield knew that Wright had asked Geno Bradely, Vicki Biggs, and Chief Deputy Parris for pills. LB Watson was Wright's cousin. There were rumors of misuse of the chaplain's benevolence fund by Amos Durham. April Spake, current assistant of SCSO Chief Deputy Parris. Spake had worked for the SCSO since November of 2017 and saw LB Watson approximately three times since she started there. Spake previously worked for the county fleet services. Spake dealt with paperwork

	regarding promotions and demotions. After a January incident involving Dawn Cheves and Watson, Spake advised Cheves that she could talk to HR. Cheves was demoted and then resigned. LB Watson did not have a computer and Lt. Todd Floyd completed his timecards. Watson resigned without notice and would not complete his final timecard. Watson was a civilian employee and was supposed to work 75 hours per pay period. Spake recalled a time when she worked in fleet services that Watson retrieved items from his county issued Chevy Impala while it was being worked on. The items were shovels and hand tools and there was dirt in the trunk of the Impala.
3/24/25	S/A Mills: Conducted three interviews along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Michael Turner, former SCSO employee. Turner was told to resign, or he would be fired due to a horseplay incident involving someone handcuffed to a chair. Sheriff Wright told Turner that SLED could or would charge him with kidnapping. Turner was told by Jeremy Byrd that a SCSO helicopter was fixed in exchange for multiple cases of SCSO duty ammunition. Turner heard rumors that Amos Durham had spent thousands of dollars from the chaplain's benevolence fund on clothing at Harrison's Workwear, used the fund to pay for an AC unit at his personal residence, and told deputies that there was no money in the fund. Allison Miller, SCSO civil division administrative assistant. Miller worked in the SCSO records division from April 2020 until January of 2023 when she transferred to the civil division. Since January of 2023, Miller saw LB Watson approximately ten times. Watson was never assigned papers. Watson told people that he "worked for Chuck." Watson is Wright's cousin. Watson typically came into the office after 5:30 PM or before 6:00 AM. Watson would "piddle" at his desk for 10-30 minutes and did not have a computer. Watson is a fire commissioner in Reidville. Watson had long hair, and his clothes were typically dirty. Watson had a job working with dirt during the day. Watson was known to say that he would get people fired. In January, Watson saw Dawn Cheves for the first time since she started in the civil division approximately six months earlier. Watson had not been into the office during those six months. Watson was angered and went to Wright. Wright then wanted Cheves to be moved. After intervention from others, Wright decided not to move Cheves. Miller was upset about the incident and Wright apologized to her and said that Watson was his cousin. Wright told Miller to tell Cheves to "let it go" when she remained upset about the incident. Wright sometimes came to Watson's desk. Wright did so on days when Watson had come into the office during the previous night. Wright has walked out of the civil division office with a white envelope. Miller heard Wright ask Barbara Mount for pain pills. Miller helped to organize a fundraiser for Donate Life in April of 2024. She believed that over one thousand dollars were raised but Amos Durham had not paid the funds. Durham told Miller that the fund raiser lost money. Miller believed that the chaplain's benevolence fund was used as a general fund instead of for its intended purpose of helping SCSO employees who were in need. Tracy Moss, former SCSO employee. Moss was told to resign or be fired for failing to investigate sexual abuse cases. Sheriff Wright told Moss that SLED was investigating her. Moss heard from other people that she was actually fired because Wright thought that she supported his political opponent. Moss had been told that scuba equipment was purchased by

	Wright with a county credit card and the listed user for the equipment was Wright's son who did not work for SCSO. Moss had also been told that Amos Durham purchased thousands of dollars of clothing at Harrison's Workwear using the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund. Moss' brother in law used to be addicted to pain pills and knew that Wright purchased pills from Michael Thornton. Moss knew of other individuals who Wright had asked for pills
3/26/25	S/A Mills: Conducted two interviews along with FBI S/A Carlisle. Lynn Hayes, former SCSO employee. Hayes was told to resign or be fired for talking about the sheriff election on duty. Hayes resigned and Sheriff Wright, in response to her resignation letter, said that she could be charged for violating the Hatch Act. LB Watson was Wright's cousin. Hayes only saw Watson once or twice during the one and a half years that she worked in the civil division. Civil division employees were discouraged from working at night and typically didn't. In approximately November of 2022, Wright asked Hayes for pain pills three times and asked her if she could find him some. Hayes heard Wright make a comment about getting muscle relaxers and pain pills from Steve Wilson during a trip to police week in Washington, D.C. Bill Burgess told Hayes that Wright had offered to pick up pills from him for a pill takeback. Hayes said there was no pill takeback scheduled near that time. Wright asked Amanda McGraw for pills in the summer of 2024. Hayes heard that Wright was supplied pills by Michael Thornton who lived on [REDACTED] Rd. Hayes recounted a time when she saw Wright drive onto [REDACTED] Rd, and she went down the road right after him but could not find him and when she tried calling him his phone went directly to voicemail three times. Wright appeared to be under the influence of something at Mark Barry's retirement. Amos Durham told Aaron and Jessica Mosher that there was no money in the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund when they asked for help. Hayes heard rumors that Durham used the Fund to pay for an AC unit at his own house and to make large purchases at Harrison's Workwear. Andrew Crisp, former SCSO employee. Crisp heard multiple rumors about Wright being addicted to and purchasing pain pills. Crisp was told that there was a video of Wright buying pills. Crisp had never seen or possessed the alleged video. Crisp was told that Trysten Searcy's sister used to sell Wright pills. Crisp heard that the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund was used to purchase fuel for SCSO helicopters.
3/27/25	Worked on MOI. Coordinated with FBI to schedule interviews on 3/28/25 and 3/31/25.
3/28/25	S/A Mills: Conducted three interviews along with FBI S/A Newsome. Jim Powell, long time acquaintance and supporter of Sheriff Wright. Powell saw Wright during a visit to a doctor in 2023 and mentioned having two bottles of prescription pain pills that he needed to dispose of. Wright told Powell that he could take them to the SCSO for disposal. The next day, Wright called Powell and said that he could pick the pills up for him. Wright and Amos Durham came to Powell's residence and Wright took possession of the pills. Tracy Robbs, ex-wife of John Robbs. Tracy Robbs dated John Robbs for several years. John Robbs was a drug user and also sold pain pills. Tracy Robbs witnessed Sheriff Wright come to John Robbs' residence and conduct a hand to hand exchange of what she thought to be pain pills on approximately three different occasions. Tracy Robbs said that she knew Wright

	because they went to high school together. John Robbs never seemed to get in trouble for crimes he committed in Spartanburg County. Jeff Moss, acquaintance of Sheriff Wright, former pain pill addict. Moss believed Wright's change in physical appearance was indicative of pain pill use. Wright told Moss in recent months that he used pain pills which he was prescribed. Moss used to purchase pain pills from Michael Thornton. While Moss was at Thornton's house one day, Thornton received a phone call and indicated that the caller was Wright, and he was coming by to purchase pain pills. Thornton asked Moss to leave the house and come back. Moss then saw Wright driving toward Thornton's house in his SCSO vehicle and when Moss returned, Wright was leaving Thornton's house.
3/31/25	S/A Mills: Conducted an interview along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Charles "Danny" Shields, former SCSO civil division Sergeant. Shields became the sergeant in the civil division in, approximately, 2001-2004 and remained in the position until he retired in January of 2020. LB Watson was assigned to the civil division in approximately 2005 and was under Shields' supervision. Watson served papers and helped Shields with judgements. Watson worked as a "floater" which meant that he was not assigned a specific area to serve papers in. Watson came to the office most days and was often there before Shields. Shields never had issues with Watson's performance or behavior. Mark Barry was the Captain of the civil division, and he kept up with employee statistics. A 70-75% service rate for civil papers was a reasonable expectation. Civil division secretaries assigned papers to deputies based on what areas they needed to be served in. During approximately the last year of Shield's time at the SCSO, Watson took over many of the responsibilities of preparing judgements. Watson ran a grading business and had employees who worked for him. Within recent weeks, Sheriff Wright called Shields and asked him to send an email about what Watson did at work. Shields sent Wright the email.
4/1/25	S/A Mills: Conducted an interview along with FBI S/A Carlisle. Craig Bradley, SCSO Deputy in the civil division. Bradley transferred to the civil division in approximately 2019 or 2020. During his first weeks in the division, a secretary, Tina Dean, told Bradley to never give LB Watson papers to serve because he wouldn't serve them. Bradley saw Watson approximately twice per year but saw other civil division employees daily. Watson and Sheriff Wright were cousins. Civil division deputies were directed not to serve papers at night due to safety considerations. In recent years, civil division deputies were told to use their radios more often. Around Christmas of 2024, Watson delivered two loads of rock to Bradley's residence at an unknown time. Bradley and Watson spoke on March 24, 2025, regarding Bradley paying Watson for the loads of rock. During that conversation Watson advised Bradley that he had retired weeks earlier. Bradley was previously unaware that Watson no longer worked at the SCSO. Approximately three or four years ago, Sheriff Wright wanted to return to operations with the SCSO dive team which Bradley managed. Wright purchased a dive computer to use while working on the dive team. That dive computer stayed in the dive team inventory once Wright decided to no longer participate on the dive team. S/A Mills: Conducted an interview along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle.

	Grant High, family friend of Sheriff Wright. High's father and Sheriff Wright were friends, and High had known Wright since he was a child. In approximately 2023, High's daughter began became a SCSO Deputy. On January 30, 2023, High's daughter was sworn in at a ceremony at the SCSO. High's arm was in a sling at the event due to a recent shoulder surgery. Wright told High that his knee was hurting and asked if he had anything that could help the pain. High told Wright that he had some pain pills left over. Wright went to High's residence after the ceremony and High gave him the prescription bottle which contained an unknown number of pills. Wright drove a Ford truck to High's residence. On November 4, 2024, Wright spoke at High's father's funeral. After the funeral, Wright called High and asked if he remembered helping him when his back was hurting. High told Wright that he did not have any pills. High heard a rumor that Vance Burgess provided pain pills to Wright in exchange for Apple gift cards. High knew that Burgess was discharged from the military after failing a drug test.
4/2/25	S/A Mills: Conducted an interview along with FBI S/A Carlisle. Barbara Mount, SCSO civil division secretary. Mount began working in the SCSO records division October 3, 2011, and transferred to the civil division on February 28, 2025. Approximately four years ago Sheriff Wright asked Mount for a Lortab for a headache. Mount did not have a Lortab. Allison Miller and Dawn Cheves were present when Wright asked Mount. Mount heard that LB Watson and Wright were related. Mount asked Amos Durham for assistance from the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund when her husband passed away. Durham used the fund to directly pay Mount's electric bill twice. Durham kept a copy of the electric bill and had Mount complete a form.
4/4/25	S/A Mills: Conducted interviews along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Tina Dean, former SCSO records and civil division employee. Dean knew not to assign papers to LB Watson unless told to by a supervisor. Watson did not return papers when they were assigned to him. During Dean's first two weeks working in the civil division, Watson had a conversation with her in which he told her not to assign him papers, that he worked for Sheriff Wright, he was Wright's cousin and do not talk about it, and he worked for the SCSO for insurance. Dean often did Watson's timesheet for him. Dean heard Watson say that he did campaign work and other things for Wright. Danny Shields knew that Watson did not work. Watson ran a paving or grading business all day during the workweek. Watson had Dean type quotes for his grading business. Scott Southern, Lt. at Lyman PD. Southern was told approximately eight months ago that a drug dealer named Jerry McCue sold pills to Sheriff Wright. Southern heard rumors that there was a recording of Wright buying pills. When Southern's daughter was sick, Wright told Southern that he was going to bring him a check, but Wright never brought a check. Steve Wilson, SCSO civil division, former patrol lieutenant. Sheriff Wright first asked Wilson

	for pain pills in approximately July of 2024. Wilson gave Wright two or three pills. Wright asked Wilson for pills a second time and said that he would pay Wilson back once he had his prescription filled. Wilson gave Wright two or three pills and told Wright not to worry about “repaying” them. Wright later came to Wilson’s house and gave him several pills to “pay back” the ones Wilson gave him. Wilson said that he still had the pills Wright gave him. Wright asked Wilson for pills a third time and Wilson declined to provide him any. During a trip to Washington D.C. for police week in 2023, Wright asked Wilson for something for his back and Wilson provided him one pill.
4/7/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOI.
4/8/25	S/A Mills: Accompanied S/A Newsome to serve target letters to Michael Thornton and John Robbs. Thornton stated that he had provided pills to Sheriff Wright in the past. S/A Mills: Conducted interview along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. George “Andy” Clark, retired from SCSO. Clark was the Lt. over records and software from 2017 until 2024. LB Watson got Dawn Cheves (Hill) a job in the records department. After Cheves and Watson broke up, Sheriff Wright wanted to fire Cheves. Wright said that she was a bad employee, but she was not. Watson harassed Cheves after their breakup and Clark reported it to Capt. Mark Barry who reported it to Chief Deputy Parris. Watson was Wright’s cousin and was assigned to the civil division. Watson didn’t serve papers on time, was rarely seen, and his computer password, which Clark had to reset, was always expired. Lt. Mike Creek knew that Watson did not work. The Chaplain’s Benevolence Fund was used to pay for SWAT clothing and K9 gear. Clark knew of the following allegations: Brad Roper was a no show employee, Melissa Ward watched ACADIS videos for Wright, Wright had not done EVOC training in three years and had skipped three drug tests, Wright allegedly paid for a helicopter to be repaired with SCSO duty ammunition, and the SCSO sex offender fund was missing money. S/A Mills, S/A Newsome, and S/A Carlisle met with Steve Wilson who turned over two pills he had remaining from the ones Sheriff Wright gave him. The pills were round, white, and imprinted “RP” on one side, and “10 325” on the other side. S/A Mills photographed the pills and collected them. S/A Mills took the pills directly to the SLED Laboratory and submitted them into evidence for drug analysis.
4/9/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOI.
4/10/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
4/11/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
4/14/25	S/A Mills: Met with FBI S/A Newsom and AUSA Morris to discuss case strategy and interview witnesses.
4/16/25	S/A Mills: Attended federal grand jury. Discussed case strategy with S/A Newsome, S/A Carlisle, and AUSA Morris..
4/17/25	S/A Mills: Worked on MOIs.
4/18/25	S/A Mills: Conducted interview of Amanda Wilson along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Amos Durham told Wilson and Chief Deputy Parris that Sheriff Wright had gotten approximately \$17,000 of Chaplain’s Benevolence Fund money in cash from Durham in recent years. Durham said that Wright always told him the cash was for deputies in need.

	Later, in a phone call, Durham told Wilson that there was over \$50,000 in cash given to Wright since 2017. S/A Carlisle scheduled an interview with Durham for April 29, 2025.
4/21/25	S/A Mills: Conducted (proffer) interview of Michael Thornton along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Thornton's lawyer, Janis Richardson, was present. Thornton sold prescription pain pills (Lortab/Norco) to Sheriff Wright for approximately the last eight to ten years. Wright paid cash for the pills. Wright came to Thornton's residence, met him at businesses, and met him at the SCSO to purchase the pills. When Thornton met Wright at the SCSO he put the pills in a white envelope. At times, Wright purchased pills multiple times per month and most recently paid \$10 per pill. Wright typically drove a truck when meeting Thornton, previously a blue Ford Raptor, and most recently a red Ford. Thornton suspected that Wright also purchased pills from other people. Wright once gave Thornton a Chaplain's Benevolence Fund check to pay Thornton's light bill. Wright used the word "hooks" when referring to pills. Thornton thought that he last sold pills to Wright on March 29, 2025, when Thornton met Wright at a local business. Thornton believed their meeting was captured on the business' security camera.
4/23/25	S/A Mills: Had a meeting with S/A Newsome, S/A Carlisle, and State Ethics Commission Investigator Brad White. White said that Sheriff Wright's employment of his son, Andy Wright, and his use of the county issued credit card for personal purchases were the focus of his investigation. White had investigated and documented many of the credit card purchases and confirmed that they were personal in nature. White said that he would provide the documentation he had.
4/24/25	Case review with Major Robertson.
4/29/25	S/A Mills: Conducted interview of Amos Durham along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Durham's lawyer, Ricky Harris, was present. Sheriff Wright regularly went to Durham and told him that he needed cash from the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund for a deputy in need. Wright typically did not specify who the deputy was or what their need was. On multiple occasions, Wright also got cash from Durham which Wright said was to pay someone for information about a case. Durham estimated that he gave Wright approximately \$70,000 in cash from the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund since 2018. Wright did not begin documenting the cash he gave Wright until 2020. In May of 2023, Wright got \$4,000 cash from Durham for a trip to Washington, D.C. for police week. Durham accompanied Wright on at least six occasions where Wright collected unused prescription pills from individuals who had family members pass away or individuals who had surgeries. Wright supposedly collected the pills for destruction, but Durham did not know what happened to them. Durham did not recognize a check written to Michael Thornton or recognize the name. Durham said that the amount and date written on the check were his handwriting, but the name of the payee was not in his handwriting. On April 1, 2025, Wright met with Durham and members of the SCSO command staff. Wright said that he was sick and was taking a leave of absence. In a phone call later that day, Wright told Durham that he had been self-medicating with pain pills. Durham provided a

	copy of a memo he had given to Wright on October 28, 2024 which stated that the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund had a deficit of funds which were earmarked for specific uses.
4/30/25	S/A Mills: Conducted interview of Dena Burgess along with FBI S/A Newsome and S/A Carlisle. Burgess was a deputy in the civil division at the SCSO. Sheriff Wright asked Burgess for pain pills in March of 2025.
5/2/25	S/A Mills advised Solicitor Barnette that prosecutorial coordination was needed. Solicitor Barnette conflicted the case to the Attorney General's Office. The AG's Office advised that they would find a Solicitor to handle it due to having a conflict also.
5/5/25	S/A Mills was advised by S/A Newsome that Amos Durham announced his resignation as the SCSO Chaplain effective May 16, 2025. S/A Mills spoke with State Ethics Commission Investigator Brad White to discuss the status of the case.
5/12/25	S/A Mills spoke with FBI S/A Newsome. Newsome stated that he and S/A Carlisle were working to catch up on 302s and analysts were reviewing financial documents. Newsome thought that the investigation was on track for federal indictments around June 17, 2025.
5/13/25	S/A Mills, S/A Newsome, S/A Carlisle, and AUSA Morris met with Mark Barry. Barry confirmed that he told Chief Deputy Parris that LB Watson was not working. Barry also said that Amos Durham was advised what the Chaplain's Benevolence Fund could be used for and what the proper procedures were on multiple occasions.
5/20/25	S/A Mills spoke with S/A Carlisle. Carlisle confirmed that the investigation was on track for federal indictments on June 17, 2025. Financial documents were still under review by FBI analysts. Sheriff Wright was known to have returned to work from his leave of absence.
5/21/25	S/A Mills received the drug analysis report for the pills submitted to the SLED lab on April 8, 2025. Oxycodone and Acetaminophen were found in the sample tested.
5/28/25	S/A Mills, FBI S/A Erin Carlisle, and AUSA Morris interviewed Chief Deputy Parris and discussed the status of the case.
5/30/25	S/A Mills, FBI S/A Erin Carlisle, FBI S/A Newsome, and SC Ethics Commission Inv. Brad White met for a case update.
6/3/25	S/A Mills advised Capt. Kindley that no solicitor was assigned the case yet.
6/6/25	S/A Mills provided S/A Carlisle interview recordings and copies of MOIs. Agents discussed the status of the investigation.
6/7/25- 6/14/25	S/A Mills was on annual leave.
6/16/25	Lt. Vaughn advised S/A Mills that Solicitor Micah Black would prosecute the case. Meeting with Solicitor Black scheduled for 6/18/25.
6/17/25	S/A Mills spoke with S/A Newsome who advised that USAO and Wright's lawyers had agreed for Wright to plead to a bill of information. S/A Newsome did not know details of any possible plea deal. S/A Newsome thought that agents would attempt to serve LB Watson with a target letter on 6/20/25.
6/18/25	S/A Mills and Lt. Vaughn briefed Solicitor Black on the investigation and provided Black with AUSA Morris' contact information.
6/25/25	S/A Mills spoke with Solicitor Black. Black advised that he had spoken with AUSA Morris who could not provide clear answers about the details of a plea deal at that time as there seemed to be negotiations ongoing between his superiors at the USAO and Wright's defense attorneys. Morris advised that he would update Black as more information became available. Mills advised Black that he would work with the FBI to obtain copies of their 302s (report

	summaries/MOI) and other available documents and also work to gain clarification on the logistics of state charges being included or parallel to a federal plea.
7/2/25	S/A Mills spoke with Solicitor Black regarding media publication of the AG's transfer of the case to Black. Solicitor Black advised that he had spoken with Wright's attorney.
7/21/25	S/A Mills: Spoke with S/A Carlisle regarding the current status of the case on the Federal level. S/A Carlisle said that she had completed a review of the bill of information but was not aware of the details of any plea deal or negotiations. S/A Carlisle said that she would work on downloading FD-302s to share with SLED and seek an answer to the question of sharing Federal Grand Jury materials with SLED and Solicitor Black. Spoke with Solicitor Black regarding the case and current needs to proceed with prosecution. S/A Mills and Solicitor Black agreed that a meeting with the FBI and USAO seemed necessary in order to coordinate State and Federal prosecution.
7/23/25	S/A Mills: Received an email from AUSA Morris regarding the scheduling of a meeting. The email was also addressed to SSRA Nefzger, S/A Carlisle, and Solicitor Black. S/A Mills responded with a list of availability for the coming weeks.
8/1/25	S/A Mills: Meeting with AUSA Morris, S/A Carlisle, and Solicitor Black set for August 18, 2025.
8/18/25	S/A Mills and Lt. Vaughn met with Solicitor Black, Deputy Solicitor Thomas, AUSA Morris, and FBI S/A Carlisle. AUSA Morris advised that federal prosecution would proceed in approximately four to six weeks by means of Wright pleading to a bill of information. AUSA Morris would not advise specifically what federal charges Wright would be charged with. S/A Carlisle expressed her desire to share FBI 302s (reports) with SLED but would need approval from FBI Headquarters due to Wright's classification as a SIM (sensitive investigative matter).
8/28/25	S/A Mills: Provided case file to Deputy Solicitor Thomas.
9/9/25	<i>Case review with Capt. Kindley.</i>
9/9/25	S/A Mills: Spoke with Solicitor Black about the case. Solicitor Black said that he had not made a decision regarding charges. Solicitor Black said that he had not been able to speak with AUSA Lothrop since the meeting on August 18, 2025, and had not received any updates from the USAO.
9/10/25	S/A Mills: S/A Erin Carlisle advised S/A Mills that she had no updates to provide and said that she was aware that Wright had a heart attack last week.
9/25/25	S/A Mills: Federal filings detailing charges were publicly released. Wright was charged with; CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT THEFT CONCERNING PROGRAMS RECEIVING FEDERAL FUNDS, WIRE FRAUD CONSPIRACY, OBTAINING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES BY MISREPRESENTATION Durham was charged with; CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT THEFT CONCERNING PROGRAMS RECEIVING FEDERAL FUNDS Watson was charged with; WIRE FRAUD CONSPIRACY
9/26/25	S/A Mills: Spoke with Solicitor Black. Solicitor Black said that he had discussed the case with Chief Keel who felt the best course of action was not to pursue state charges. Solicitor Black agreed with Chief Keel's thoughts due to the totality of circumstances and thought that the federal sentencing and forfeiture of funds would be a satisfactory resolution to the case.



CASE MANAGEMENT HISTORY

Page 1 of 1

AGENT: Ruffner, Todd (Lt.)
SUPERVISOR:
COUNTY: Spartanburg

CASE NUMBER:
VICTIM: Soc. / Public
SUBJECT: Wright, Charles – Sheriff

DATE	ACTION TAKEN
01/17/25	During the late afternoon, Lieutenant (Lt.) Todd Ruffner received a telephone call from Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) Public Information Officer (PIO) Lt. Kevin Bobo [REDACTED]. Lt. Bobo advised Lt. Ruffner that Lt. Bobo had information related to a possible joint investigation by SLED and the FBI into Sheriff Wright that he wished to share. Lt. Ruffner advised Lt. Bobo that Lt. Ruffner was unaware of any investigation, as typically, to maintain a good working relationship with the agencies, those are often sent to other regions. Lt. Ruffner advised Lt. Bobo that Lt. Ruffner would take the information and pass it up the chain of command. Lt. Bobo provided the following information: Recently, SCSO Senior Administrative Assistant (SAA) Lisa Estes was interviewed by a SLED Agent and FBI Agent regarding Sheriff Wright's usage of a county owned / controlled credit card. During the interview, the Sheriff may have entered the office during the interview with Estes and agents. This action may have intimidated Estes. After the demotion of Brandon Letterman from Administrative Captain (Capt.) to an Investigator (Inv.) in the Criminal Investigative Division (CID), Estes announced her retirement. Lt. Bobo felt this was due to some a family death / family medical issue as well as Letterman's demotion. Lt. Bobo added that during Estes' recent retirement celebration at the SCSO, Sheriff Wright spoke briefly about Estes service to the SCSO and then mentioned that he (Sheriff Wright) would miss Estes since she approved all of his credit usage / expenditures. According to Lt. Bobo, this comment caused Estes enough distress that she began to cry and then left her own retirement celebration. <i>Agent's Note: Lt. Bobo led Lt. Ruffner to believe the celebration was during the week of the 13th.</i> Sometime after the celebration, Estes received an email in her personal email from Sheriff Wright. According to Lt. Bobo, the Sheriff advised Estes in the email that he was going to have an attorney draw up an affidavit indicating that Estes authorized all the credit card usage and wanted Estes to sign it. Lt. Bobo added that former / retired Administrative Capt. Mark Barry and former / retired Lt. Mike Creek could possibly provide useful information to the SLED and FBI investigation. Additionally, Lt. Bobo added that there were rumors that the Sheriff was addicted to opioid medications; however, there was no mention of where he received the pills. Also, Lt. Bobo asked if having a cousin employed also violated the Ethics Act the Sheriff was currently under investigation for. Lt. Ruffner advised he was unsure, and Lt. Bobo advised an L.B. Watson worked in the Civil Division part time and was the Sheriff's cousin. According to Lt. Bobo, Watson recently found out an ex (girlfriend and/or wife) was working in civil and immediately went to the Sheriff to have her moved.



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February 15, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of Cole Alverson
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: Cole Alverson

Address: [REDACTED] Spartanburg, SC 29302

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1983

Phone: [REDACTED]

On February 14, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Justin Newsome interviewed Alverson at [REDACTED] Spartanburg, SC. The interview was audio/video recorded. *Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated.* Alverson provided the following information: Alverson was the Spartanburg County Administrator. A complaint was received via the county's ethics hotline on January 15, 2025. The complaint alleged that Lawson (LB) Watson was compensated to work but did not actually work and was a cousin of Sheriff Wright. Leslie Abbott, the county's internal auditor, referred the complaint to Chief Deputy William Parris on January 21, 2025.



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Abbott examined county records to determine if Watson was an employee of the sheriff's office and if there were any indicators of unusual activity regarding his employment. Watson was determined to be a sheriff's office employee, no records for Watson were found within the court management system, and Watson's most recent performance evaluation in his personnel file was for 2007. There was a personnel action form for the hiring of Watson as a Code Enforcement Officer effective April 8, 2005, signed by Sheriff Wright and a personnel action form dated April 29, 2005, and signed by Chief Deputy Parris which increased Watson's salary. Watson's job title, code enforcement, was unlike anyone else at the sheriff's office, and there was no job description within his personnel file. On February 6, 2025, Chief Deputy Parris replied to Abbott's referral of the complaint and said that he declined to investigate it because it would be a conflict of interest for himself, or anyone affiliated with the sheriff's office.

On February 10, 2025, Alverson called retired Administrative Captain (Capt.) Mark Barry to ask about the situation with Watson. Barry advised Alverson that the complaint was valid, and that records indicative of Civil Division employee's performance could be found within Spillman, the sheriff's office's report management system, and within the civil activity log. Barry expressed frustration to Alverson about a lack of performance from Watson over a period of time. On February 11, 2025, Abbott requested Chief Deputy Parris to provide the Civil Division assignment log for the past twelve months. Chief Deputy Parris declined to do so. *Agent's Note: Alverson provided a paper copy of the email exchanges between Abbott and Chief Deputy Parris.*

On February 12, 2025, Alverson called the 911 Director, Lisa Coleman, and asked if Watson had a radio call sign or radio identification. Coleman advised that Watson's call sign was 138 and there were no records for Watson with dispatch. Coleman did find dispatch records for other civil process servers. Coleman did not have a radio identification on file for Watson. The same day, Alverson had a meeting with County Councilman David Britt and Sheriff Wright. Sheriff Wright said that Watson was a good worker, and that Watson was a fourth cousin of his mother. Sheriff Wright mentioned that Watson had previously been in a relationship with a female sheriff's office employee and was assigned to second shift because of that. Sheriff Wright said that Watson was now assigned to magistrate court. During the meeting, Sheriff

Wright made a phone call to Lieutenant (Lt.) Todd Floyd and told him to provide Alverson records for Watson's work performance.

On February 13, 2025, Alverson met with Lt. Floyd and provided him a copy of the complaint against Watson. Floyd said that there were no records which would indicate performance for Watson and that Watson only occasionally came to the office and left notes for Lt. Floyd to let him know if there was anything he could do to help. Lt. Floyd referenced Watson's previous relationship and said that after it ended Watson began leaving the notes during the night. Lt. Floyd recounted a February 6, 2025, meeting with Sheriff Wright and Watson in which Sheriff Wright instructed Watson that he would work for Lt. Floyd. Lt. Floyd advised Alverson that he completed timecards for Watson and Watson did not have a computer issued to him. Lt. Floyd reported that he had notified Lt. Mike Creek, Capt. Barry, Capt. Letterman, and First Lt. McGill of his concerns regarding Watson's lack of performance. Lt. Floyd noted that Watson's appearance during their meeting with Sheriff Wright was inconsistent with how other sheriff's office employees were expected to look. Lt. Floyd showed Alverson a picture of Watson taken during that meeting that showed Watson with long hair and a long beard. Lt. Floyd told Alverson that it was common knowledge within the sheriff's office that Watson did not work. Lt. Floyd noted that he was fearful for his job if he made an issue of Watson's performance.

Alverson recounted a meeting with Sheriff Wright regarding Sheriff Wright's county credit card spending. Sheriff Wright said that some purchases were made accidentally due to confusion caused by his personal and county card being the same color. Sheriff Wright thought that some other charges were fraudulent. Sheriff Wright repaid \$1,100 and was asked to provide details of which charges were personal purchases, in response, Sheriff Wright provided a copy of one month's credit card statement.



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February 14, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of David Britt
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: David Britt

Address: [REDACTED], Spartanburg, SC 29302

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1953

Phone: [REDACTED]

On February 14, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Justin Newsome interviewed David Britt at [REDACTED] Spartanburg, SC. The interview was audio recorded. *Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated.* Britt provided the following information: Britt was on the Spartanburg County Council for thirty years and had a good working relationship with Sheriff Chuck Wright. After a September 2024 article was published by The Post & Courier regarding Sheriff Wright's use of a county provided credit card, Britt and County Administrator Cole Alverson had meetings with Sheriff Wright regarding the credit card spending. Sheriff Wright said that some of the



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purchases were personal in nature, and he made them mistakenly because he confused his personal and county credit cards. Sheriff Wright showed Britt and Alverson that the county credit card and his personal credit card were both red. Sheriff Wright said that he would pay to reimburse the personal purchases. Alverson told Sheriff Wright to provide a list of which purchases were personal. Sheriff Wright did not provide a list but paid \$1,100 by check and attached one month's credit card statement to it. The county council was not aware that Sheriff Wright had the credit card prior to the release of The Post & Courier article. The county auditor conducted an audit and found that the county did not have a process for oversight of Sheriff Wright's credit card. A process was put in place after the audit.

On January 15, 2025, an anonymous tip about Lawson Berry (LB) Watson was submitted through a county employee tip line. The tip said that Watson was paid \$85,000 per year by the sheriff's office, did not actually work, and was related to Sheriff Wright. When Britt asked Sheriff Wright about Watson, Sheriff Wright said that Watson worked, and he was not related to him. Chief Deputy Billy Parris was requested, by email, to investigate the complaints about Watson. Chief Deputy Parris declined the request because it would be a "conflict of interest" for him, or anyone affiliated with the sheriff's office. *Agent's Note: Alverson provided a paper copy of the email exchange with Chief Deputy Parris.*

On February 6, 2025, Spartanburg County administration received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from The Post & Courier for Watson's personnel records. Alverson was unable to find dispatch records for Watson and was told by retired Captain Mark Berry that Watson did not work. Britt and Alverson met with Sheriff Wright on February 6, 2025, and questioned him about Watson. Sheriff Wright said that Watson's supervisor would provide Alverson documentation of Watson's work and said that Watson had recently been moved from first to second shift and reassigned to the courthouse. Sheriff Wright said that Watson was his mother's fourth cousin.

After the meeting, Britt spoke with Judge Mike Wood. Britt asked Judge Wood if Watson was working at the courthouse. Judge Wood said that Watson did not work there, and Judge Wood asked another judge who also agreed that Watson did not work at the courthouse. That evening,

Britt and Sheriff Wright spoke by phone. Sheriff Wright told Britt there was no documentation of Watson working and that Watson actually worked for the county, not the sheriff's office.

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February 20, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of Dawn Cheves
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: Dawn Cheves

Address: [REDACTED] Taylors, SC 29687

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1974

Phone: [REDACTED]

On February 19, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Erin Carlisle interviewed Cheves at the SLED Piedmont Office. The interview was audio/video recorded. *Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated.* Cheves provided the following information: Cheves was an administrative assistant in the civil division of the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) since August of 2024. Cheves began working at the SCSO in July 2019 as an administrative secretary. Her job duties included receiving civil papers to be served and assigning them to deputies who would then return affidavits of service to her for entry into the record keeping system. Cheves worked



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alongside Allison Miller in that role and both were supervised by Lieutenant (Lt.) Todd Floyd. There were approximately seven deputies who worked in the civil division serving papers. LB Watson was on payroll, coded as building codes, and was supposed to work for the civil division, but was rarely seen.

Cheves dated Watson from approximately 2015 to 2020. Watson was a cousin of Sheriff Wright. When Cheves broke up with Watson, he left letters about Cheves throughout the civil division and told Cheves that he would make sure she was fired. Cheves was alarmed by one of the letters that Watson wrote, and she showed it to her lieutenant at the time, Andy Clark. Cheves thought that Captain Mark Berry reprimanded Watson for his behavior.

On January 14, 2025, Watson was in the civil division office for the first time since Cheves had transferred to the civil division in August of 2024. When Watson saw Cheves he “stormed out” of the office. When Cheves returned from lunch that afternoon, she was told by Lt. Floyd that she was going to have to move to a different office space. Lt. Floyd told Cheves that Sheriff Wright had said “Get her out of here.” After Lt. Floyd stood up for Cheves and said that Cheves and Miller needed to share a workspace, Sheriff Wright said that he would move Watson instead. On January 17, 2025, Cheves met with Sheriff Wright, Amanda Wilson was also present, and he said that he was just trying to do her a favor. Cheves told Sheriff Wright that she had only seen Watson in the office twice in four years and Sheriff Wright said that he had Watson working different hours.

On January 22, 2025, Cheves spoke with coworkers about informing human resources of the incident. On January 23, 2025, Miller told Cheves that she was told that if Cheves told anyone about the incident then her entire chain of command would be fired because they worked at the pleasure of the sheriff. On January 29, 2025, Miller called Cheves and said that Sheriff Wright and Chief Deputy Parris brought her into Chief Deputy Parris’ office and Sheriff Wright told her that if Cheves went to human resources about the incident then Cheves’ entire chain of command would be fired and “blood is thicker than water.” Cheves was told by one of the deputies in the civil division that they were told not to talk about the incident. *Agent’s Note: Cheves could not remember which deputy told her.*

Cheves was aware that Watson sometimes came into the civil division office during the night and left notes for Lt. Floyd. Cheves did not think that Watson was deputized, and she knew that he was an elected commissioner with the Reidville Fire Department. While they dated, Watson told Cheves that he did civil work and things for Sheriff Wright. Cheves witnessed Watson meet with Sheriff Wright at gas stations on multiple occasions. Watson told Cheves that Sheriff Wright was borrowing money from him during those meetings. Watson met with other individuals that he claimed to be loaning money to also. Cheves was later told by one of those individuals, Phil Horn, that Watson was actually borrowing money. Between August and November of 2024, Cheves witnessed Sheriff Wright take a thin, letter size envelope from a drawer in Watson's desk at least four times. Miller and Lt. Floyd also witnessed Sheriff Wright retrieve the envelope.

Watson often told Cheves that he got various people jobs at the sheriff's office and county. Watson had a grading business and mostly dealt in cash. Cheves thought that Watson had a business license and a general contractor's license. Watson did most of the grading work himself but would sometimes employ contract workers and pay them cash. Watson did grading work during the day and evenings. Watson's financial situation often fluctuated. Cheves observed Watson serving papers less frequently as their relationship went on and knew that Watson came to the sheriff's office much less after they broke up.

Cheves saw the deputies who served civil papers multiple times throughout the week and knew that they mostly worked normal business hours but would sometimes serve papers after 5:00 p.m. Cheves completed stat reports for the deputies in the civil division and had never entered statistics for Watson since August of 2024. Cheves said that Miller worked in the civil division for one and a half years longer than her and had never given Watson a paper to serve. Watson had a county car and telephone [REDACTED]. Watson had a personal checking account with [REDACTED] Bank. Cheves lived with Watson for approximately one year between 2019 and 2020. Cheves thought that Watson and Sheriff Wright's mothers were sisters.



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January 15, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of Lisa Estes
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: Lisa Estes

Address: [REDACTED], Boiling Springs, SC 29316

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1965

Phone: [REDACTED]

On January 15, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Justin Newsome interviewed Lisa Estes at the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO). Estes provided the following information: Estes had worked for the SCSO for approximately thirty years and was retiring on January 17, 2025. Estes was the Senior Administrative Assistant to the Administrative Captain. The Administrative Captain during Sheriff Chuck Wright's time as Sheriff had been Mark Berry until he retired, and Brandon Letterman became the Administrative Captain in January of 2024. Letterman had stepped down from the position in recent weeks. Estes responsibilities included paying invoices, ordering supplies, maintaining accounts, and managing budgets. Estes managed all SCSO accounts,



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including accounts containing seized drug funds. The Chaplain Fund was separate from SCSO accounts and was managed by Chaplain Amos Durham.

Estes was aware of what the media had reported regarding Sheriff Wright's use of a SCSO provided credit card. Estes said that only Sheriff Wright used that credit card account. The account had been used for many years and Estes believed it was originally intended to be used to pay for Sheriff Wright's expenses associated with travel for conferences but was acceptable for use on anything used by the SCSO. The SCSO received account statements in the mail and Estes would submit payments for approval. While Berry was Captain, the various charges were paid for by specific accounts but soon after Letterman became Captain, he directed Estes to pay for all of the account charges with money from a drug fund account. Estes did not make decisions regarding the account and had never received training regarding the rules pertaining to drug funds. Estes said that payment requests went from her to a lieutenant, then to the administrative captain, and then to the Spartanburg County Finance Office where multiple people reviewed it before a payment was made. Since 2018, payment requests and digital copies of the account statements were entered into a software system called "Munis." Paper copies of the statements were not kept once the payments were approved. The most recent credit card statement balance payment had not been paid due to a hold placed by the finance office. Estes believed that the hold was placed after the media reported on Sheriff Wright's spending was released.

Sheriff Wright's use of the credit card had gradually increased over the years. Estes said there had not been any sudden changes in spending at any point and she had never been suspicious of any of the charges that she noticed. At the end of 2024, Sheriff Wright gave Estes a check for \$1,111 as a reimbursement for accidental purchases made with the credit card. Estes was not aware of any additional reimbursement payments. While Berry was Captain and purchases were itemized for payment, Estes sometimes had to clarify with Berry what accounts to pay for purchases with. Berry never expressed concerns about any of the charges or spending to Estes. Estes was not aware of any rumors or allegations regarding improper use of any SCSO accounts.

Estes also managed the SCSO's petty cash fund. Estes only remembered Sheriff Wright getting approximately one hundred dollars from the fund on two or three occasions and she said that he had always completed the proper form or returned the cash within a week. The petty cash fund was subject to surprise audits and there had never been any cash unaccounted for.

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February 15, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of Mark Barry
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: Mark Barry

Address: [REDACTED], Spartanburg, SC 29307

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1961

Phone: [REDACTED]

On February 14, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Justin Newsome interviewed Barry at the Greenville FBI office. The interview was audio/video recorded. *Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated.* Barry provided the following information: Barry was a lieutenant of investigations at the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) when Sheriff Chuck Wright was first elected. Sheriff Wright offered Barry the position of patrol or administrative captain. Barry chose to be the administrative captain and served in that role until he retired in January of 2024. The administrative captain was responsible for the budget, recruiting, civil division, grants,



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supply, fleet, accreditation, chaplains, records division, and the public information officer. Barry, Lisa Estes, and the supply sergeant had purchase cards, but the sergeant turned his in. Sheriff Wright had a county credit card. *Agent's Note: Purchase cards were commonly used by government agencies and had guidelines which included the submission of receipts for all purchases.* Barry's understanding was that a county credit card could be used for county purposes. Barry verbally told Sheriff Wright to provide receipts for his credit card purchases to Estes. Sheriff Wright provided receipts when told to for specific purchases but did not provide receipts for his typical spending.

Sheriff Wright paid for his work travel with his county credit card. Approximately one and a half years before Barry retired, Estes and the budget director, Kelly Newman, notified Barry that there were purchases made from Apple and they did not know what they were. Barry notified Chief Deputy William Parris and the two of them went to Sheriff Wright about the Apple purchases. Sheriff Wright said that he would reimburse those charges. Barry did not know if Sheriff Wright ever made a reimbursement. The Apple purchases were on multiple months' billing statements. Estes told Barry that Sheriff Wright made some reimbursements, but she did not think that he paid for all of the Apple purchases.

Estes received the credit card statements and determined which account should be used to pay for individual expenses. Barry was not sure if Estes used specific accounts for individual charges on the credit card statement or used one account to pay for the monthly bill in entirety. Barry did not typically make determinations on which accounts to make payments from. Payments went to the county finance office after submission by Estes. The only charges that stood out to Barry were the Apple purchases. Approximately six months before he retired, Barry took a credit card statement to Chief Deputy Parris and pointed out multiple charges that Barry could not explain. Barry thought that was the last time he discussed the credit card spending with Chief Deputy Parris. Chief Deputy Parris was the only person who could give advice and explain things to Sheriff Wright.

Barry did not know why Sheriff Wright did not have a purchase card. Barry suspected that some of Sheriff Wright's credit card charges were personal purchases. Barry did not think that

forfeiture accounts were ever used to pay Sheriff Wright's credit card statements. Estes never went directly to Sheriff Wright with questions about credit card statements.

Brandon Letterman replaced Barry as the SCSO administrative captain when Barry retired. Sheriff Wright called Barry and told him that he had demoted Letterman because he was micromanaging too much. Sheriff Wright asked Barry if he would train the next captain and Barry declined.

Barry had a file on LB Watson. Watson owned multiple vehicles and rotated one tag amongst them. Watson had issues with the Reidville Town Council. Watson dated Dawn Hill and got her a job at the sheriff's office. *Agent's Note: Hill later married and changed her last name to Cheves.* When they broke up, Watson created issues, and Barry went to Sheriff Wright about the situation. Barry, Sheriff Wright, and Chief Deputy Parris had a meeting about the situation and Sheriff Wright said that Watson would apologize to everyone. Barry wrote a memo about the incident and thought that Chief Deputy Parris put it in Watson's file. Barry never again went directly to Sheriff Wright regarding Watson.

Watson was a relative of Sheriff Wright. When Watson was hired at the SCSO, human resources (HR) did not know how to classify a civilian employee of the sheriff's office who was serving civil papers. The HR director, Tony Bell, looked for a county grade classification that had similar pay to a deputy who served civil papers and decided to classify Watson as a code enforcement officer. Watson served papers, judgements, and evictions when he first started at the SCSO. In approximately the summer of 2023, Barry noticed that Watson was not listed in the monthly statistics for the civil division and asked Lieutenant (Lt.) Floyd where Watson's statistics were. Lt. Floyd told Barry that he "couldn't touch" Watson because Watson was Sheriff Wright's cousin. Lt. Floyd told Barry that Watson had not served papers in months.

It was well known that Watson had another job as a contractor. Records of Watson's performance should be found in Spillman, the SCSO's record management system. Sheriff Wright was defensive of Watson. Barry rarely saw Watson in recent years. Records of Watson's key fob activity at the SCSO could be examined. Lt. Floyd or Sergeant Dana

Boulware were responsible for approving Watson's timesheets. Allison Miller and Dawn Cheves were secretaries in the civil division.

In recent years, Sheriff Wright has not listened to his command staff. Barry was aware of a common rumor that Sheriff Wright had a problem with pain pills. Barry had no direct knowledge or observations to substantiate the rumor. The relationship between Sheriff Wright and Chief Deputy Parris was strained in recent years. It was not common practice to hire civilian employees to serve civil papers. Barry thought that Watson was hired because he was Sheriff Wright's cousin.



South Carolina

STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

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December 4, 2024

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of Sheriff Chuck Wright
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: Charles "Chuck" Wright

Address: [REDACTED] Spartanburg, SC, 29303

Phone: [REDACTED]

On November 22, 2024, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) S/A Justin Newsome interviewed Sheriff Chuck Wright at the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO). At Sheriff Wright's request, Captain (Capt.) Brandon Letterman was also present during the interview. The interview was audio recorded. *Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated.* Sheriff Wright provided the following information: Sheriff Wright was aware of the Post and Courier news article regarding purchases made using his Spartanburg County credit card. Sheriff Wright described Capt. Letterman as who he requested approval from to spend money. *Agent's Note: Capt. Letterman replaced Mark Barry as the Administrative Captain in January of 2024.* Sheriff Wright said



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that he used a county provided credit card for work related purchases and relied on the credit card statements as documentation of purchases. Sheriff Wright thought that he could use the credit card for anything work related and that purchases over five hundred dollars required approval by the finance department. Steve Strickland, a helicopter pilot, also had access to the credit card.

Sheriff Wright said that charges at hotels were for stays during training he attended and that he had made purchases for the flight team. Sheriff Wright thought that a September 2019 hotel stay in Memphis, Tennessee was for an employee's stay during training. Sheriff Wright thought that a June 21, 2022, charge at a Hampton Inn in Spartanburg was to house an informant utilized by SCSO narcotics investigators. Sheriff Wright said that he had made small personal purchases with the county credit by mistake and then provided cash to Lisa Estes in order to reimburse the purchase. *Agent's Note: Estes was the Senior Administrative Assistant to the Administrative Captain. Estes was responsible for accounts payable. She was interviewed on January 15, 2025. See Lisa Estes memorandum of interview for a summary of that interview.*

Sheriff Wright said that he had his personal and county credit cards saved on his county phone for purchases. Sheriff Wright played a game on his county phone which resulted in multiple Apple charges to his county credit card which he intended to be charged to his personal credit card. Sheriff Wright wrote a check for \$1,100 to Spartanburg County as reimbursement for those charges. Sheriff Wright thought that "there has to be" enough sheriff's office official use to account for approximately \$10,000 in additional Apple purchases. Sheriff Wright said that former Captain Steve Cooper would know what applications caused the additional charges. Sheriff Wright thought that the \$1,100 check covered all of his personal purchases that he was aware of. Capt. Letterman said that the \$1,100 was calculated based upon charges in September 2024 which appeared on the October 2024 credit card statement. Sheriff Wright said that he did not pay attention to the credit card statements until the Post and Courier article was published.

Sheriff Wright said that he used the county credit card to purchase meals when at training but did not typically use it for meals while in Spartanburg. Sheriff Wright said that his personal and county credit cards were the same color and had led to him using the county card on accident

before. Sheriff Wright said that he would pay for any accidental purchases he made. Capt. Letterman said that the county credit card statements were paid for with the state drug fund account. In the past, Estes paid for individual purchases with specific accounts. Sheriff Wright said that he understood the credit card was permitted for buying gas, meals during training, and supplies for deputies. Sheriff Wright said that the credit card was not for “personal stuff” but there may have been small personal charges from times when he had used the wrong card. Sheriff Wright said that he gave Estes money to reimburse those purchases on the occasions that he realized his mistake.

Sheriff Wright did not “have a clue” why there were charges for Pure Flix and thought they were fraudulent. Sheriff Wright said that he had a Pure Flix subscription at his house but thought that his wife had set up the account. Sirius-XM charges were for Sheriff Wright’s work truck. Sheriff Wright did not know what Pure Clean Keto and True Fitness Online were and had not purchased them in his personal time. *Agent’s Note: While Sheriff Wright took a smoke break, Capt. Letterman said that the only application he knew of with an official use which would have a recurring charge was Casper, which the narcotics unit used. Casper was not purchased through Apple. Capt. Letterman said that Sheriff Wright had only asked him for permission to purchase Fore Flight and an optic for his pistol.*

Sheriff Wright recalled looking at an application for FitOnTheRun.com but did not remember making a purchase on it. Sheriff Wright did not know what True Fitness or True Fitness Attire was. Purchases at C & C Ammunition and T & K Outdoors were for official use and included a pistol mounted optic and firearms training. Sheriff Wright said that he called Capt. Letterman for approval of any large purchases. Sheriff Wright thought that a purchase at Gibson & Barnes was a flight suit for a SCSO pilot. Purchases at Common Thread Embroidery, Harrison’s Workwear, and Hat Flow, were clothing for official SCSO use. A \$582 purchase at Scuba Shop was equipment for the SCSO dive team. Purchases at Best Buy, Tractor Supply, Academy Sports, and Ace Hardware were items for official SCSO use. Sheriff Wright was unsure what a \$75 purchase at Verdin’s Farm and Garden was for but suspected he had used the wrong card to purchase corn. A purchase at Christian Supply was for books on leadership that were given to SCSO employees. Purchases at Vic Bailey Ford were for SCSO vehicles. Sheriff Wright said

that wish.com purchases were accidental. A purchase at Art Lounge was for SCSO employee awards and retirement gifts. Sheriff Wright said that he never intentionally used the county credit card to make a personal purchase. *Agent's Note: Capt. Letterman advised the credit card bills were exclusively paid for with money from the sheriff's office state drug fund account in recent months, but specific purchases had previously been paid for by other accounts when appropriate.*

The Chaplain's Benevolence Fund (CBF) was a 501(C)(3) account which was managed by Pastor Amos Durham. The purpose of the CBF was to assist SCSO employees in need. Requests for assistance were typically made to Durham, and he would usually provide a check but sometimes provided cash. If cash was given, Durham documented it. Sheriff Wright had received cash from Durham and given it to SCSO employees. Sheriff Wright described the form of CBF assistance as, "99% of the time it's a check...very small amount of cash." Sheriff Wright said that he did not know the balance of the CBF account and could not withdraw funds from it. Sheriff Wright thought that Durham could provide up to \$500 in CBF assistance without approval from anyone else.

Sheriff Wright said that he did not have evidence to the SCSO evidence room or "dope fund." Sheriff Wright said that, to avoid accidental purchases in the future, he would use a procurement card or keep receipts. In concluding the interview, Sheriff Wright said, "I've never purposely taken any money out of the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office that I knew I shouldn't do. I've never done nothing like that, and I won't."



South Carolina

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February 24, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of Robert Todd Floyd
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: Robert Todd Floyd
Address: [REDACTED], Seneca, SC 29672
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1970
Phone: [REDACTED]

On February 21, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Erin Carlisle interviewed Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) Lieutenant (Lt.) Robert Todd Floyd at the SLED Piedmont Office. The interview was audio/video recorded.

Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated. Lt. Floyd provided the following information: Lt. Floyd supervised employees of the SCSO assigned to the civil division, sex offender registry, mental health transports, civil magistrate court, and civil circuit court. Lt. Floyd became a sergeant in late 2019 when he replaced Danny Shields, who had served in the position since Bill Coffee was sheriff. The position was turned into a lieutenant



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position in approximately 2021. Dana Boulware was promoted to sergeant in approximately 2021. Lt. Floyd began working at the SCSO on patrol in 1997 and transferred to the civil division in 2012.

Lt. Floyd supervised approximately fourteen sworn deputy positions and two office managers. Lt. Floyd supervised LB Watson until Watson resigned on February 13, 2025. *Agent's Note: Lt. Floyd did not know Watson's given name. Based on prior investigation, S/A Mills knew it was Lawson Barry.* Deputies in the civil division worked forty-three hours per week, Monday through Friday. When Shields was sergeant, he assigned Watson to work on judgements. Prior to his promotion to sergeant, Lt. Floyd had no interaction with Watson or awareness of what he was doing. Lt. Floyd remembered seeing documentation that Watson served papers in 2018. Shields assigned Watson papers and Watson did not turn them in. Watson was a "FOC, a friend of Chuck." Lt. Floyd did not know that Watson was Sheriff Wright's cousin until later. Watson told people that Sheriff Wright was his cousin.

In approximately 2021, Watson and a woman he dated, Dawn Cheves, broke up. *Agent's Note: Dawn Cheves' last name was Hill at the time she dated Watson, but she will be referred to as Cheves throughout this memorandum for clarity.* There were issues with Watson's behavior after he and Cheves broke up. Former Captain (Capt.) Mark Barry handled that matter and had more knowledge of the issues than Lt. Floyd. Cheves had a job at the SCSO because of Watson. After they broke up, Watson said that he could not come into the sheriff's office while Cheves was working. Watson was then rarely seen at the sheriff's office and began leaving a note on Lt. Floyd's office door that said, "call me if you need me," approximately three nights per week.

Former Capt. Andy Clark told Lt. Floyd that Watson was not issued a computer because he never checked his email. Tina Dean, a civil division administrative assistant, completed Watson's timecard until she retired in approximately 2023. Lt. Floyd was then told by Barry to complete Watson's timecards. Barry told former administrative assistant Alicia Piggins to stop listing Watson's name on the monthly statistics list. Approximately three weeks ago, Watson requested to use sick leave because of a spider bite. Lt. Floyd was unable to request sick leave

for Watson, so he went to April Spake about it. Spake wanted nothing to do with Watson, so she went to Chief Deputy William Parris about the issue and that resulted in Watson being assigned a computer that evening. Chief Deputy Parris then directed Lt. Floyd to show Watson how to complete his timecards on the computer.

Chief Deputy Parris told Lt. Floyd that he told Sheriff Wright that everyone knew that Watson was not working. Watson told people that he got them their job. When Lt. Floyd was promoted to sergeant, Watson told him that he had asked Sheriff Wright to promote him. Watson told employees who were new to the civil division not to ask what he did and that he did things for Sheriff Wright.

Within the past two weeks, Sheriff Wright called Lt. Floyd and told Lt. Floyd that he had a meeting and needed to know what Watson had done in the last month. Lt. Floyd typed a letter which stated that there was no documentation of work performance for Watson. Sheriff Wright called Lt. Floyd and again told him to get the statistics for Watson. *Agent's Note: Lt. Floyd believed that the second phone call from Sheriff Wright occurred while Sheriff Wright was in a meeting with county councilman David Britt and county administrator Cole Alverson.* Shortly after, Lt. Floyd and Sheriff Wright had another phone conversation and Sheriff Wright seemed flabbergasted that Watson had no statistics in recent years. Lt. Floyd then received a phone call from Alverson who requested to meet with him. Lt. Floyd spoke with Chief Deputy Parris and asked him what he should do. Chief Deputy Parris told Lt. Floyd not to lie. Amanda Wilson, Sheriff Wright's assistant, was present and also told Lt. Floyd not to lie. Lt. Floyd met with Alverson the next day and described Watson's work performance and issues to Alverson. Lt. Floyd referred Alverson to former lieutenant Mike Creek to corroborate the information.

Lt. Floyd, Watson, and Sheriff Wright had a meeting on February 3, 2025. Sheriff Wright told Watson that he and Lt. Floyd needed to figure out what work Watson could do. *Agent's Note: Lt. Floyd showed agents a picture of Watson during the meeting. S/A Mills observed that Watson was wearing a t-shirt, had shoulder length hair, and long facial hair.* Watson was scheduled to begin serving magistrate court papers on February 17, 2025. Prior to February 3, 2025, Lt. Floyd never had a conversation directly with Sheriff Wright about Watson.

Lt. Floyd always went to Lt. Mike Creek and Barry when there were issues with Watson. Lt. Floyd believed that Barry then took the issues to Chief Deputy Parris. Lt. Floyd went to his supervisors with concerns regarding Watson's timecards, Watson not changing the oil in his county vehicle, and Watson driving a vehicle with blue lights. Lt. Floyd thought that Barry always notified Chief Deputy Parris of the issues. Lt. Floyd also made Capt. Brandon Letterman aware of his concerns regarding Watson's timecards. Lt. Floyd heard that Capt. Letterman requested Watson's personnel file sometime at the end of 2024. Capt. Letterman had to request the personnel file from Spake. On February 21, 2025, Lt. Floyd was advised by Spake that Watson was actually assigned to the administrative division and should not have been under Lt. Floyd's supervision.

In 2024, Chief Deputy Parris began to create an Office of Professional Standards (OPS). Prior to 2024, Chief Deputy Parris handled all OPS or internal affairs matters. OPS pertained only to sworn personnel of the SCSO. Chief Deputy Parris showed Lt. Floyd an ethics complaint regarding Watson which Chief Deputy Parris had been asked to investigate. Chief Deputy Parris said that it was a conflict of interest for him to investigate it. Chief Deputy Parris told Lt. Floyd that he told Sheriff Wright that Sheriff Wright had put Lt. Floyd "in a bad situation" regarding Watson.

Lt. Floyd heard rumors of Sheriff Wright using pain pills but had no direct observations or information to substantiate the rumors. Lt. Floyd witnessed Sheriff Wright take a white, letter sized, envelope from Watson's desk drawer on at least four occasions. On one of those occasions, Sheriff Wright commented that Watson sometimes left candy for him. Lt. Floyd witnessed Sheriff Wright check the drawer on other occasions and not take anything from it. Lt. Floyd told Chief Deputy Parris about Sheriff Wright taking the envelopes and Chief Deputy Parris said that answered a lot of questions for him and maybe that was why Sheriff Wright did not want to get rid of Watson. Allison Miller, an office manager in the civil division office, witnessed Sheriff Wright retrieving envelopes and heard his comment about Watson leaving candy.

During a phone conversation with Sheriff Wright, Lt. Floyd told him he knew that Watson did things for him. Sheriff Wright responded that Watson did not do things for him during work hours. Watson did his grading business work during the day and his county issued vehicle could typically be found parked at the grading business during the day. Watson had a county issued cell phone. Lt. Floyd thought that Watson had not served any papers since 2020. No one else at the SCSO was allowed to not work as Watson was.

In January of 2025, Watson saw that Cheves was working in the civil division office. *Agent's Note: Cheves had worked in the civil division office for months prior to January of 2025.* He immediately left the office and called Lt. Floyd and asked him why Cheves was working there. Watson said that Cheves was not supposed to be working there and that he was going to call Sheriff Wright. Lt. Floyd then called Sheriff Wright and Sheriff Wright said that Cheves had to be moved. Sheriff Wright initially wanted to move Cheves to another office. After multiple people spoke to him, Sheriff Wright decided that Cheves did not have to move, and he apologized to her for overreacting. Sheriff Wright thought that Cheves filed the ethics complaint on Watson.

After that incident, Miller and Wilson were initially upset about it and wanted Watson to resign or be fired. Miller told Lt. Floyd that Sheriff Wright told her that they needed to stop talking about it, and everyone in her chain of command would be fired if they did not. After that, Miller became adversarial toward Cheves and complained about Cheves' work performance. Lt. Floyd unsuccessfully tried to mediate the situation between Miller and Cheves. Sheriff Wright demoted Cheves to the records department on February 20, 2025. Cheves resigned on February 21, 2025.

Wilson told Lt. Floyd that Sheriff Wright asked Chief Deputy Parris why no one told him that Watson was not working, Chief Deputy Parris responded that everyone had told Sheriff Wright. Sheriff Wright said that Barry was going to take the hit on that.



South Carolina

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February 12, 2025

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

TO: File 2024-03590
FROM: Special Agent Austin Mills
RE: Interview of William Parris
COUNTY: Spartanburg

Name: William Ernest Parris
Address: [REDACTED] Duncan, SC 29334
Date of Birth: [REDACTED]/1955
Phone: [REDACTED]

On February 11, 2025, Special Agent (S/A) Austin Mills and Federal Bureau of Investigation S/A Justin Newsome and S/A Erin Carlisle interviewed Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) Chief Deputy William "Billy" Parris at [REDACTED] Spartanburg, SC. The interview was audio recorded. *Agent's Note: The interview summarized in this Memorandum represents the synopsis of the interview and is not verbatim transcripts unless otherwise indicated.* Chief Deputy Parris provided the following information: Chief Deputy Parris was responsible for internal affairs, personnel matters, and running the office in the absence of Sheriff Wright. Chief Deputy Parris created an office of professional standards approximately one year ago in order to relieve his burden of investigating internal affairs. Chief Deputy Parris



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saw Sheriff Wright pay for meals with a credit card. Chief Deputy Parris did not know if the credit card was a personal or county provided card. Reviewing credit card spending and approving credit card payments was never part of Chief Deputy Parris' responsibilities. Chief Deputy Parris recalled an occasion when Administrative Captain (Capt.) Brandon Letterman mentioned that some of Sheriff Wright's county credit card purchases were inappropriate. Chief Deputy Parris did not recall Capt. Letterman speaking about specific purchases. Chief Deputy Parris and Sheriff Wright did not have a conversation specifically about the credit card charges. Chief Deputy Parris heard Sheriff Wright make general statements that he did not do anything wrong and that he was hacked. Chief Deputy Parris did not think Sheriff Wright was hacked.

Capt. Letterman's predecessor, Capt. Mark Barry, never came to Chief Deputy Parris about credit card issues. Capt. Barry had a "whale of a time" keeping Sheriff Wright "in check" with the drug fund and preventing him from making purchases which were not allowed. Sheriff Wright should have known more about policies and financial matters. There was a lack of communication between Sheriff Wright and Chief Deputy Parris in recent years. Sheriff Wright was more disconnected from the sheriff's office the last couple years.

Two or three years ago, Sheriff Wright asked Chief Deputy Parris if he had any pain medicine. Chief Deputy Parris told Sheriff Wright that he had Tramadol and Sheriff Wright said that he could not take that because it upset his stomach. Vicki Biggs, Sheriff Wright's former administrative assistant, told Chief Deputy Parris that Sheriff Wright asked her for pain pills. Approximately three years ago, former Capt. Steve Cooper told Capt. Raymond Guist and Chief Deputy Parris that he heard Sheriff Wright had a pill problem. Capt. Cooper, Capt. Guist, and Chief Deputy Parris then met with Sheriff Wright and Capt. Cooper told Sheriff Wright what he had heard. Sheriff Wright denied having a problem.

Two or three years ago, former SCSO patrol Capt. Greg Satterfield was approached by Andrew Crisp who claimed to have a video of Sheriff Wright purchasing pain pills. Chief Deputy Parris advised Satterfield to provide that information to SLED and he did. *Agent's Note: Crisp never provided SLED a video and denied ever personally seeing a video.* Chief Deputy Parris did not

know what happened after that. Chief Deputy Parris observed Sheriff Wright appear to be under the influence of a substance on multiple occasions.

LB Watson was a SCSO employee in the civil division until he resigned recently. Watson previously dated Dawn Cheves and got her a job working in records at the SCSO. *Agent's Note: At the time, Dawn's last name was Hill, she changed her name to Cheves after a recent marriage. Cheves is used throughout this memorandum for clarity.* In approximately 2020, Watson and Cheves broke up and had a "big blow up." Sheriff Wright took Watson's side because they were cousins and Watson's work schedule was changed so that it would be less likely for him to see Cheves. Chief Deputy Parris had little involvement in the situation because Sheriff Wright knew Chief Deputy Parris did not think favorably of Watson. Capt. Barry came to Chief Deputy Parris when Watson's disruptive behavior continued. Chief Deputy Parris told Capt. Barry to tell Watson that if he did not leave Cheves alone Chief Deputy Parris would find a way to have him fired.

There was an incident where Watson was serving a paper, and someone drew a gun on him because they did not think he was a law enforcement officer. Watson was wearing a firearm during the incident. Watson was issued a firearm by the SCSO in the past. Approximately two months ago, Watson saw Cheves, who had transferred from the records division to the civil division, in the civil division office and "went stupid." Watson went to Sheriff Wright and Sheriff Wright told the civil division Lieutenant (Lt.), Todd Floyd, to move Cheves to another office so Watson would not have to see her. Chief Deputy Parris found out that Watson had not been serving papers but had been coming in late at night and left notes for Lt. Floyd. Cheves told Chief Deputy Parris that Watson was a criminal and pulled a gun on her one time. Chief Deputy Parris talked with Sheriff Wright about the situation and told him that Cheves had done nothing wrong. Chief Deputy Parris was told that when Sheriff Wright apologized to Cheves and told her that she did not have to move, he said "you got to understand he's my cousin."

Chief Deputy Parris received an email which asked him to investigate an anonymous ethics complaint on Watson which alleged that Watson did not work but was allowed by Sheriff Wright to receive a paycheck. Chief Deputy Parris did not think that it was appropriate for him

to investigate a complaint involving Sheriff Wright. Chief Deputy Parris informed Sheriff Wright of the complaint and Sheriff Wright told him to speak with Lt. Floyd. Chief Deputy Parris showed the complaint to Lt. Floyd and Lt. Floyd said the information was accurate. Chief Deputy Parris sought legal advice on the matter and declined to investigate the complaint because it was a conflict of interest and not within Spartanburg County policy. Chief Deputy Parris declined an additional request for activity records of civil division employees for the same reason.

Chief Deputy Parris knew Sheriff Wright had a meeting with the county administrator, David Britt, and someone else. After that meeting, Lt. Floyd advised Chief Deputy Parris that Sheriff Wright told him to find Watson and tell him to resign immediately. Chief Deputy Parris told Lt. Floyd not to do that. Chief Deputy Parris advised Sheriff Wright that Watson resigning would not appear good. Chief Deputy Parris found out that Lt. Floyd had been completing Watson's timecards for him, Watson did not have a computer, and Watson had an issue with his email. Chief Deputy Parris told Lt. Floyd that Watson had to start completing his own timecards and needed to have a computer.

Lt. Floyd told Chief Deputy Parris that Sheriff Wright came into the civil division office and removed an envelope from a drawer of Watson's desk two or three times per week and once made a comment that Watson had left him candy. Chief Deputy Parris said that knowledge of Sheriff Wright's suspected pain pill addiction was widespread throughout the office and "tic tacs" was used as a code word when referring to pills. Chief Deputy Parris heard that Sheriff Wright had asked Greg Satterfield, Vicki Biggs, and Amanda Wilson for pain pills. Chief Deputy Parris did not know of anyone who had given Sheriff Wright pills. Former SCSO Capt. Dan Johnson told former Capt. Cooper that Sheriff Wright was rumored to have a pill problem and that Sheriff Wright's sister talked about it at church.

Prior to the incidents involving Watson in 2025, Chief Deputy Parris was not aware that Watson was not serving papers but knew that Watson's schedule had changed. Watson had not actually worked since before Capt. Barry retired. Lt. Floyd told Chief Deputy Parris that Watson told people that he was doing things for the sheriff and if they had a problem with that they should

ask the sheriff. Chief Deputy Parris did not recall anyone coming to him regarding Watson after the issues when Cheves and Watson broke up. Sheriff Wright thought Cheves submitted the anonymous ethics complaint on Watson. Capt. Letterman also received an ethics complaint on Watson prior to the one Chief Deputy Parris received. Capt. Letterman tried to pull Watson's personnel file and Sheriff Wright "flew hot" when he found out. Sheriff Wright was "taking up for" Watson when he discussed that complaint with Chief Deputy Parris.

Chief Deputy Parris asked Lt. Floyd why Watson had not been serving papers. Lt. Floyd said that Watson "screwed them up" and judges complained. Lt. Floyd felt that Sheriff Wright was protecting Watson, and it was well known that you should not say anything bad about Watson. Chief Deputy Parris "could not see how" Sheriff Wright was not aware that Watson was not working. Capt. Barry went to Sheriff Wright about issues with Watson. Watson did not make it a secret that he and Sheriff Wright were cousins and "set the table" that if he were messed with he would tell Sheriff Wright.

General Case Information	
Case Number	105
Date Received	01/15/2025 05:21:12 PM EST
Primary Issue Type	Theft of Time
Alert Status	None
Language	English
Case Details	
Case Source	Mobile Intake
Reporter Anonymous	Yes
Reporter Name	
Reporter Phone	
Reporter Email	
Reporter Availability	
Participant Name	LB Watson
Participant Name	Chuck Wright
Location	
8045 Howard Street	
City	Spartanburg
State	SC
Zip	29303
Country	United States
Location Name	Sheriff's Office
SubUnit	
Location3	
Location4	
Branch Number	20
Location Name	Sheriff's Office
Details	
County employee LB Watson is a cousin of Sheriff Wright. LB official job on paper is Code Enforcement but works at the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff has allowed LB to be on payroll for several years without any work assignments. None. When questioned why we have someone on the books that absolutely does nothing... it's the Sheriff's cousin and you can go ask him. This employee may come to the office 3 times a year. There is absolutely no supervision, no job duties while he makes \$70k plus. This has been a waste of tax dollars and abuse by a public official for many years. This employee literally sits at home and collects a paycheck with no work being performed. None. The Sheriff thinks he above the law. Prime example, the company credit card. Any other county employee has to produce a receipt. The Sheriff knows LB has no job duties and collects a check every two weeks. It's clearly obvious LB doesn't do anything. His LT, Todd Floyd, will tell you this if you were to ask him as part of this investigation which I hope you do. This is a waste of taxpayer funds and has to stop.	
Intake Questions	
None	
Follow-ups	
None	

Complaint # 105 – Theft of Time

- Complaint received in on hotline 1/15/2025
- Forwarded to John Harris 1/15/21
- Internal consultation on how to handle
- Decided to handle via standard protocol related to employee related complaints within elected official offices – relayed to Leslie Abbott (IA)
- Leslie emailed to Chief William (Billy) Parris on 1/21/25 requesting to investigate
- Leslie Abbott reviewed a variety of internally accessible data sources
 - Fuel pump data including mileage from fueling system
 - Concluded that LB Watson was driving about 10,000 -12,000 miles per year, similar to other non-public safety county vehicle usage and similar to mileage usage for personal operated vehicles
 - Reviewed time entry records for LB Watson for past several years in Munis
 - Concluded that LB Watson was normally entering 75 hours per pay period (biweekly) and taking about 2 weeks of vacation per year
 - During calendar year 2024, no vacation or other leave was taken – this atypical for County employees
 - Time entry records approved by Lt Todd Floyd & batched by April Spake
 - Reviewed CMS records related to any agency code directly or indirectly affiliated with the County
 - Did not find any record of LB Watson appearing within those data sets
 - Retrieved Personnel File from Human Resources and reviewed
 - Last performance evaluation in the file was completed by Captain Mark Barry and covered performance in calendar year 2007. Completed in 2008
 - John Harris later reviewed the personnel file independently of Leslie Abbott
 - Personnel action form hiring LB Watson as a Code Enforcement Officer was effective 4/8/05, signed by Sheriff Chuck Wright
 - Personnel action form dated 4/29/05 increased salary of LB Watson & retroactive to his date of hire with Sheriff's Office, Signed by Chief Billy Parris
 - Queried court public index looking for work-related entries for LB Watson

- Highlighted a number of personal traffic-related entries
 - Highlighted a civil case entry - liable/slander/defamation(?)
- Attempted to retrieve copy of job description for a Code Enforcement Officer in the Sheriff's Office
 - No record could be located
- Leslie sent a follow-up email to Chief Parris on 2/4/25 to prompt a response
- Chief Parris replied 2/6/25 citing a conflict of interest and declining to investigate
- Met with Leslie Abbott evening of 2/6/25 to review
- Met internally on 2/10/25 (Cole, Earl, Kevin, John, Ryan, Leslie) to discuss email from Chief Parris and discuss next steps
- Called Captain Mark Barry 2/10/25 to try to determine whether any records should exist within the Sheriff's Office that would indicate work assignments assigned and completed to LB Watson
 - Administrative staff used to track performance metrics in Spillman and work assignments should exist there, possibly on a civil activity log
 - Talked to Mark about his knowledge of LB Watson, work assignments and plausibility of complaint
 - Mark indicated that he had internally noted issue multiple times prior to retirement and indicated that it was plausible
- Instructed to Leslie Abbott to reply to prior email chain with Chief Parris requesting copies of civil activity log and spillman records showing work assignments and completions by LB Watson – email sent 2/11/25
- Chief Parris replied via email to Leslie Abbott evening of 2/11/25 declining to provide records & citing prior email
- Email was forwarded internally to multiple recipients including myself morning of 2/12/25
- Consulted with Councilman David Britt and Chairman Manning Lynch morning of 2/12/25 to provide updates and seek guidance
 - David indicated that he would reach out to Sheriff to set up a meeting after our 11:00 meeting at Tindall to see why we received the reply
- Called Lisa Coleman - 9-1-1 Director shortly thereafter requesting her to review radio records of key-ups and other activity for LB Watson and other civil process servers on Sheriff's Office to determine work productivity relative to other civil process servers
- Sheriff Wright texted me Lt Floyd's contact card
- During 11:00 meeting, David indicated that he would text Sheriff Wright to postpone meeting start in light of duration of the 11:00 meeting

- In transit to the meeting at Tindall with Sheriff Wright, called Lisa Coleman to get status of her research
 - She indicated that she found that LB Watson's call sign was 138, but that they could find not records of key-ups or other activities
 - She indicated that other process servers did have activity
 - She indicated that no radio ID was on-file for LB Watson
- Met with Sheriff Wright and David Britt at Tindall in David's office approximately 2:00 PM 2/12/25
 - Meeting was uncharacteristically brief
 - Sheriff wanted to know why we were there
 - David outlined concern with records denial and asked if records existed
 - Sheriff Wright said that Chief Parris poorly worded his email response and that records would be provided
 - Sheriff Wright noted that LB Watson was a hard worker and that he had assigned him to 2nd shift and more recently assigned him to work at the Courthouse in Magistrate Court
 - Sheriff Wright noted that LB Watson was a 4th cousin of his mother
 - Sheriff Wright called Lt Floyd on his cellphone during meeting and asked whether Lt Floyd had civil records that showed that LB Watson had been working. I could not hear Lt Floyd's response. Sheriff told Lt Floyd to provide me with what I needed related to LB Watson's work activity. Call ended abruptly.
 - Sheriff reiterated commitment to providing what we needed. Meeting ended abruptly.
 - David Britt accompanied Sheriff Wright out while I remained in David's Office
 - David and I shared personal reactions to meeting
- Upon leaving Tindall and while returning to the County Administrative building, I called Lt Todd Floyd to ask about records that he could provide related to LB Watson.
 - He indicated a desire to meet in person
 - We scheduled a time via phone to meet (8:30 – 2/13/25)
- Called David Britt to share the update
- Sheriff Wright attempted to call – I did not answer
- Updated Chairman Lynch via phone call
- Received text from David evening of 2/12/25 asking me to call him at some point that evening
- Called David Britt approximately 8:28 PM

- David shared a summary of his call from Sheriff Wright earlier in the evening
 - No documents were available in civil to evidence any work being done
- David included Judge Mike Wood in the call to inquire whether LB Watson was currently assigned at Magistrate Court
- Met with Lt. Todd Floyd approximately 8:30 AM 2/13/25
 - Shared a copy of the complaint with Lt Floyd
 - Asked him if LB Watson was working in civil division and if he had activity logs to substantiate any work
 - No logs are available – there is no back-up at all that would indicate performance
 - Indicated that LB Watson only occasionally appeared in office to leave notes – showed me notes in his personal possession
 - LB Watson relayed that he was “doing stuff for the Sheriff”
 - Lt Floyd indicated that he, Sheriff Wright, and LB Watson met on 2/6/25 to outline new work expectations and assignment to Magistrate Court
 - Lt Floyd indicated that new duty was to begin 2/17/25 and that a meeting with Judge Wood and Judge Willingham was scheduled for later in the week
 - Lt Floyd noted that everyone in the office knew that LB Watson worked for Sheriff and did not work much if any
 - Lt Floyd noted that he entered his time because LB Watson was unable to operate a computer and was not issued one for some time
 - Lt Floyd noted that he raised concerns with this arrangement, lack of assignments, and other concerns using the chain of command multiple times.
 - Notification to LT Mike Creek
 - Notification to Captain Mark Barry
 - Notification to then Captain Letterman
 - Notification to then 1st LT McGill – only briefly in role
 - Lt Floyd indicated that he was fearful that his employment would be terminated if he deviated from prior treatment of LB Watson
 - Lt Floyd noted that LB Watson could not legally serve papers on 2nd shift.
 - He also noted that an incident in 2021 within the office with another employee (Dawn) and LB Watson that resulted in a change to when he would occasionally show up in office – that now occurs after hours

- Lt Floyd asked if I had reviewed logs for the door fog system – I do not have access to those systems
 - LT Floyd strongly encouraged me to call Lt Mike Creek to substantiate his statements and that he followed the chain of command to report the issue
- I called David Britt at 10:05 on 2/13/25 and provided a brief synopsis of my meeting with LT Floyd and that he had confirmed that no records exist and that there were no work duties being done that he was aware of
 - David commented that based upon some advice that he received earlier in the morning, he thought that we should now contact Solicitor Barry Barnett to discuss the matter and get his advice on how to proceed.
- After a few failed attempts to connect via phone with Chairman Lynch, we connected via phone at 11:35 on 2/13/25.
 - I provided a brief synopsis of my call with David from the prior evening and my meeting with Lt Floyd.
 - I shared that David was contacting Solicitor Barnett and Manning concurred that this was the appropriate step to take in light of the information we had.
 - We discussed timing for the meeting in the afternoon
- After a phone call with David Britt, I pulled employee pay logs for LB Watson from Munis for all available time and summarized the data
 - Data confirmed that regular, full-time hours (with very few if any exceptions) had been logged since 2018 and that pay was received.
 - The total gross pay received, inclusive of clothing allowances, employee gift cards and retention incentives total \$346,313.64 over the time period with data in Munis. This amount represents only the gross wages paid. I excluded benefits and other costs paid by the County on wages or related to employment or equipment. 12,825 compensated hours were compensated.
- I relayed the information to David as a confirmation of Leslie Abbott's prior review.
- I called Lt Mike Creek at 2:03 PM 2/13/25 to seek confirmation of the information provided by Lt Floyd.
 - Mike confirmed the work arrangement
 - Mike confirmed that Lt Floyd's concerns were shared up the chain of command to include to Captain Barry. He also confirmed that Captain Barry left the room to speak with Chief Parris and that Chief Parris was made aware.
 - I asked Mike for his best assessment of whether LB Watson had worked since his hire at the Sheriff's Office in April 2005. He replied that he believed that approximately 95% of the time LB Watson was with the Sheriff's Office was not actually worked.

- Mike also confirmed that it seemed to be widely known in the Sheriff's Office
- Chairman Manning Lynch, Councilman David Britt, John Harris and myself met with Solicitor Barry Barnett at 2:30 on 2/13/25 at the County Administrative Offices in Conference Room 2
 - We reviewed all the information, phone calls, meetings and consultations that were made in reviewing the complaint.
 - He recommended that SLED be engaged to investigate the matter.

Parties

Leslie Abbott – Internal Auditor

Chris Allen – Staff Auditor

Earl Alexander – Deputy County Administrator

Kevin Stiens – Assistant County Administrator

John Harris – County Attorney

Ryan Gaylord – Deputy County Attorney

Captain Mark Barry (Retired) – Administration

Lt Mike Creek (Retired) - Administration

Lt Todd Floyd – Civil Division

Tony Bell – Former HR Director

Alverson, Cole

From: Abbott, Leslie
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 8:05 AM
To: Alverson, Cole; Alexander, Earl; Stiens, Kevin
Cc: Harris, John
Subject: FW: Fraud hotline case #105 - Theft of Time

Please see below from Chief Parris.

From: Parris, Billy
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 5:49 PM
To: Abbott, Leslie <labbott@spartanburgcounty.org>
Subject: Re: Fraud hotline case #105 - Theft of Time

Ms. Abbott,
I maintain the same position as I did with my previous response concerning this matter. I feel that in providing the requested documents is not my responsibility and places me in a position of assisting with the investigation.
Chief Parris

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Abbott, Leslie <labbott@spartanburgcounty.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 12:13:36 PM
To: Parris, Billy <bparris@spartanburgcounty.org>
Subject: RE: Fraud hotline case #105 - Theft of Time

Chief Parris,
Please send me the Civil Division Assignment log for the past 12 months and any additional assignment logs from Spillman.
Thank you,
Leslie

From: Parris, Billy
Sent: Thursday, February 6, 2025 3:55 PM
To: Abbott, Leslie <labbott@spartanburgcounty.org>
Subject: RE: Fraud hotline case #105 - Theft of Time

Ms. Abbott:

In response to your request that I investigate Fraud Hotline Case #105 alleging "Theft of Time" against the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office, it is my opinion that it would be a conflict of interest for either me, or anyone affiliated with the Sheriff's Office, to conduct or participate in such an investigation.

Furthermore, upon a review of the "Spartanburg County Ethics Policy Statement" there is an "Investigation Procedure" available for this type of situation. According thereto, allegations such as those made in this matter "shall be promptly investigated by a team of individuals designated by the County Administrator".

Therefore, I respectfully decline to investigate the allegations contained in the Fraud Hotline Case #105 due to the inherent conflict of interest. Any investigation into the allegations contained therein should be conducted by individuals without any affiliation or connection to the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office.

If anything else is needed at this time please let me know.

William Parris
Chief Deputy

From: Abbott, Leslie
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 3:24 PM
To: Parris, Billy <bparris@spartanburgcounty.org>
Subject: FW: Fraud hotline case #105 - Theft of Time

Chief Parris,
Just following up to see if you have had a chance to investigate this case.

Best,
Leslie

From: Abbott, Leslie
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 3:46 PM
To: Parris, Billy <bparris@spartanburgcounty.org>
Subject: Fraud hotline case #105 - Theft of Time

Chief Parris,

We received the attached anonymous report on the county's Fraud Hotline. As this relates directly to a complaint about the Sheriff's office, I am required to send this to you for investigation. Please investigate this complaint and advise for our Fraud Hotline files.

Thank you.

Leslie Abbott
Director of Internal Audit
Spartanburg County Administration
366 N Church Street
Spartanburg, SC 29303

Office: (864) 598-7066
Website: spartanburgcounty.org



From: [Justin Newsome](#)
To: [Erin Carlisle](#); [Mills, Austin](#)
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - Fwd: LB Watson
Date: Monday, March 31, 2025 1:51:08 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of SLED. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 1:30:29 PM
To: Newsome, Justin K. (CO) (FBI) <jknewsome@fbi.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - Fwd: LB Watson

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Wright, Chuck" <cwright@spartanburgcounty.org>
Date: March 4, 2025 at 9:41:26 PM EST
To: Danny Shields <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: LB Watson

Thank you Danny

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Danny Shields <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 3, 2025 7:14:23 PM
To: Wright, Chuck <cwright@spartanburgcounty.org>
Subject: LB Watson

CAUTION: **THIS EMAIL ORIGINATED FROM AN EXTERNAL SOURCE**
Use caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this email.
Please contact IT if you have questions.

During my time as Sgt. of the Civil Division, LB worked for me serving DSS papers, Summons and complaints, he handled a lot of Writs. He would follow through the eviction process. He filled in for other officers if they were in training or on vacation. He would handle all of their civil papers in their absence. LB assisted me with the executions of judgements. Including holding meetings with the defendants. He would do property searches. He would assist in the sale of property's. He would assist with new hires, meeting with them to explain how the Civil Division operates. LB would work some evenings trying to serve papers after people would home from work. He

worked for me until I retired in January 2020.

Sgt. Danny Shields
Retired

Sent from my iPad

FITSNEWS



SPARTANBURG COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
CHUCK WRIGHT, SHERIFF

Dear County Council Members,

December 19, 2024

I hope this letter finds you well. I wish to take this opportunity to address the recent inquiries regarding the charges on my county credit card. As the Sheriff for the past 20 years, I have always prioritized transparency and accountability in my financial dealings, especially when it pertains to public funds.

Firstly, I would like to clarify that I have never knowingly used my county credit card for any purchases unrelated to my official duties. I appreciate your concerns and hope the following explanations will provide clarity on various charges.

Regarding the Apple charges, I am unable to detail each transaction. Some of these charges pertain to applications used by the Aviation unit, while others may be erroneous fees linked to trial versions of apps. Upon discovering these discrepancies, I promptly removed my county credit card from the App Store to avoid further issues. It seems my county and personal credit cards were mistakenly used interchangeably, leading to some of these unexpected charges.

Concerning expenses at gas stations and stores, these were likely for fuel and other necessary items for deputies while responding to crime scenes or other law enforcement situations. Although I do not have exact recollections of each charge, I can assure you that they were incurred for county-related activities.

As for the charges from Shine on 9, this was a monthly auto-draft for the washing of my county-issued vehicle. Similarly, the OnStar and Sirius subscriptions were set as auto-drafts for my county vehicle, specifically for map guidance and emergency assistance while I am on duty.

Regarding the Truefitness Online and Amazon Prime charges, I do not recall making these purchases and have checked my subscriptions, finding no accounts linked to either service under my name.

Any charges related to C&C Ammo were for necessary accessories or gunsmith work on county firearms. There were also instances where I took newly hired deputies to the shooting range, which would have contributed to these expenses.

In terms of hotel stays, most charges were associated with travel for state Sheriff's Conferences. There were rare occasions where my card was utilized in emergencies—such as housing officers during events like Rolling Thunder or accommodating victims of violence for a night. However, all of these expenses relate to official travel.

I must also acknowledge that for in-person transactions, I may have mistakenly used my county credit card instead of my personal one due to their similar appearance. Any such instances were purely accidental. Once I noticed these small charges, the amount (\$15.00 or such) was reimbursed to Lisa Estes who is the financial administrative assistant at the office.

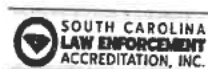
In conclusion, I assure you that all charges made were in connection with my official responsibilities as Sheriff. While some may have been erroneous, they were not made with any intention of personal gain. I appreciate the scrutiny and hope this letter provides assurance regarding my commitment to responsible spending.

Thank you for your understanding, and please feel free to reach out if further clarification is needed.

Sincerely,



Sheriff Chuck Wright



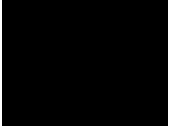
From: Stoner, Tricia
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2024 11:02 AM
To: Vaughn, Daren
Subject: Watson
Attachments: Watson2024.pdf; Watson2023.pdf

Let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks,

Tricia L. Stoner, CFCI
Senior Special Agent
SLED Investigative Services
SC Dept. of Employment & Workforce
4400 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29210
(803) 223-1511- Mobile
tstoner@sled.sc.gov



Report Type	Ssn	Last Name	First Name
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON

FITSNEWS

MI	Report Year	Report Quarter	Total Wages
B	2024	1	\$14,772.26
B	2024	2	\$15,026.77
B	2024	3	\$15,940.92

FITSNEWS

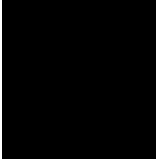
Hours Worked

525

450

525

FITSNEWS

Report Type	Ssn	Last Name	First Name
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON
Original Wage Report		WATSON	LAWSON

FIT\$NEWS

MI	Report Year	Report Quarter	Total Wages
B	2023	1	\$14,345.78
B	2023	2	\$12,315.61
B	2023	3	\$15,252.75
B	2023	4	\$15,084.58

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Hours Worked

525

450

525

450

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Watson, Lawson B
Pay History

Check Number	Sum of Hours	Sum of Amount
07/12/2018	75	1710.04
07/26/2018	75	2311.15
08/09/2018	75	1769.73
08/23/2018	75	1769.73
09/06/2018	75	1769.73
09/20/2018	75	1769.73
10/04/2018	75	1769.73
10/18/2018	75	1769.73
11/01/2018	75	1769.73
11/15/2018	75	1769.73
11/29/2018	75	1765.39
12/13/2018	75	1769.73
12/14/2018	0	32.48 Employee Gift Card
12/27/2018	75	1769.73
01/10/2019	75	1767.34
01/24/2019	75	1767.35
02/07/2019	75	1767.35
02/21/2019	75	1767.35
03/07/2019	75	1767.35
03/21/2019	75	1769.73
04/04/2019	75	1769.73
04/18/2019	75	1769.73
05/02/2019	75	1769.73
05/16/2019	75	1769.73
05/30/2019	75	1765.38
06/13/2019	75	1769.73
06/27/2019	75	1769.73
07/11/2019	75	1769.73
07/15/2019	0	541.42 Clothing Allowance
07/25/2019	75	1769.73
08/08/2019	75	1769.73
08/22/2019	75	1769.73
09/05/2019	75	1769.73
09/19/2019	75	1769.73
10/03/2019	75	1769.73
10/17/2019	75	1769.73
10/31/2019	75	1765.38
11/14/2019	75	1769.73
11/27/2019	75	1769.73
12/12/2019	75	1769.73
12/13/2019	0	32.48 Employee Gift Card
12/23/2019	75	1769.73
01/09/2020	75	1769.73

01/23/2020	75	1881.51	
02/06/2020	75	1881.51	
02/20/2020	75	1881.5	
03/05/2020	75	1881.5	
03/19/2020	75	1881.5	
04/02/2020	75	1881.5	
04/16/2020	75	1881.5	
04/30/2020	75	1877.15	
05/14/2020	75	1881.5	
05/28/2020	75	1881.5	
06/11/2020	75	1881.51	
06/25/2020	75	1881.5	
07/09/2020	75	1881.51	
07/16/2020	0	541.42	
07/23/2020	75	1881.5	
08/06/2020	75	1881.5	
08/20/2020	75	1881.5	
09/03/2020	75	1881.5	
09/17/2020	75	1881.51	
10/01/2020	75	1881.51	
11/12/2020	75	1881.5	
11/25/2020	75	1881.51	
12/10/2020	75	1881.5	
12/17/2020	0	32.48	Employee Gift Card
12/23/2020	75	1881.5	
01/07/2021	75	1905.21	
01/21/2021	75	1905.2	
02/04/2021	75	1905.21	
02/18/2021	75	1905.2	
03/04/2021	75	1905.2	
03/18/2021	75	1905.2	
04/01/2021	75	1905.2	
04/15/2021	75	1905.2	
04/29/2021	75	1877.15	
05/13/2021	75	1905.2	
05/27/2021	75	1905.2	
06/10/2021	75	1905.21	
06/24/2021	75	1905.2	
07/08/2021	75	1905.2	
07/22/2021	75	1961.52	
07/23/2021	0	541.42	Clothing Allowance
08/05/2021	75	1961.51	
08/19/2021	75	1961.51	
09/02/2021	75	1961.51	
09/16/2021	75	1961.52	
09/30/2021	75	1933.47	
10/14/2021	75	1961.51	

10/28/2021	75	1961.51	
11/10/2021	75	1961.51	
11/24/2021	75	1961.52	
12/09/2021	75	1961.51	
12/16/2021	0	54.15	Employee Gift Card
12/23/2021	75	1961.51	
01/06/2022	75	1961.51	
01/20/2022	75	1955.91	
02/03/2022	75	1955.91	
02/17/2022	75	1955.9	
03/03/2022	75	1955.9	
03/17/2022	75	1955.9	
03/31/2022	75	1933.46	
04/14/2022	75	1955.9	
04/28/2022	75	1955.9	
05/12/2022	75	1955.9	
05/26/2022	75	1955.9	
06/09/2022	75	1955.91	
06/23/2022	75	1955.9	
07/07/2022	75	1955.9	
07/11/2022	0	541.42	Clothing Allowance
07/21/2022	75	2052.6	
08/04/2022	75	2052.59	
08/18/2022	75	2052.59	
09/01/2022	75	2052.59	
09/15/2022	75	2052.6	
09/29/2022	75	2030.15	
10/13/2022	75	2052.59	
10/27/2022	75	2052.59	
11/10/2022	75	2052.59	
11/23/2022	75	2052.6	
12/08/2022	75	2052.59	
12/15/2022	0	54.15	Employee Gift Card
12/22/2022	75	2052.59	
01/05/2023	75	2052.61	
01/19/2023	75	2052.61	
02/02/2023	75	2052.61	
02/16/2023	75	2052.6	
03/02/2023	75	2052.6	
03/16/2023	75	2052.6	
03/30/2023	75	2030.15	
04/13/2023	75	2052.6	
04/27/2023	75	2052.6	
05/11/2023	75	2052.6	
05/25/2023	75	2052.6	
06/08/2023	75	2052.61	
06/22/2023	75	2052.6	

07/06/2023	75	2052.6	
07/12/2023	0	541.42	Clothing Allowance
07/20/2023	75	2113.53	
08/03/2023	75	2113.53	
08/17/2023	75	2113.53	
08/31/2023	75	2091.08	
09/14/2023	75	2113.53	
09/28/2023	75	2113.53	
10/12/2023	75	2113.53	
10/26/2023	75	2113.53	
11/09/2023	75	2113.53	
11/22/2023	75	2113.53	
12/07/2023	75	2113.53	
12/08/2023	0	2349.25	
12/14/2023	0	54.15	Employee Gift Card
12/21/2023	75	2113.53	
01/04/2024	75	2113.53	
01/18/2024	75	2113.53	
02/01/2024	75	2113.53	
02/15/2024	75	2113.53	
02/29/2024	75	2091.08	
03/14/2024	75	2113.53	
03/28/2024	75	2113.53	
04/11/2024	75	2113.53	
04/25/2024	75	2113.53	
05/09/2024	75	2113.53	
05/23/2024	75	2113.53	
06/06/2024	75	2113.53	
06/13/2024	0	2345.59	Retention Incentive
06/20/2024	75	2113.53	
07/03/2024	75	2113.53	
07/18/2024	75	2218.07	
07/19/2024	0	541.42	Clothing Allowance
08/01/2024	75	2218.07	
08/15/2024	75	2218.07	
08/29/2024	75	2195.62	
09/12/2024	75	2218.07	
09/26/2024	75	2218.07	
10/10/2024	75	2218.07	
10/24/2024	75	2218.07	
11/07/2024	75	2218.07	
11/21/2024	75	2218.07	
12/05/2024	75	2218.07	
12/06/2024	0	2345.59	Retention Incentive
12/12/2024	0	54.15	Employee Gift Card
12/19/2024	75	2218.07	
01/02/2025	75	2218.07	

01/16/2025	75	2218.07
01/30/2025	75	2195.62
02/13/2025	75	2218.07
Grand Total	12825	346313.64

*Gross Wages Only; excludes benefit costs

FITSNEWS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF SPARTANBURG)
)
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
-versus-)
)
CHARLES WRIGHT,)
)
Defendant.)
_____)

IN THE COURT OF GENERAL SESSIONS
SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

**AGREEMENT TO RELINQUISH
LAW ENFORCEMENT CERTIFICATIONS**

FILED
2025 OCT 29 AM 9:46
CLERK OF COURT
SPARTANBURG COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

Agreement to Relinquish Law Enforcement Certification

I, Charles Wright, a former law enforcement officer with the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office and the former elected Sheriff of the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office, hereby understand and acknowledge the following:

Having entered into an agreement with the United States Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina to plead guilty to an Information charging Conspiracy to Commit Theft Concerning Programs Receiving Federal Funds, Wire Fraud Conspiracy, and Obtaining Controlled Substances, I enter this agreement with the State of South Carolina as a condition of my plea in federal court.

In exchange for the State of South Carolina not pursuing separate state actions based on the same conduct encompassed within the federal charges, I, Charles Wright, agree to the following:

1. Pursuant to South Carolina Code of Laws Section 23-23-10, et. seq. and any corresponding acts and/or regulations, I, Charles Wright, hereby surrender and relinquish all law enforcement certifications acquired, earned, or possessed in the State of South Carolina. Moreover, I surrender and relinquish any and all rights, privileges, or opportunities in the future to serve as a law enforcement officer in the State of South Carolina or any other State and/or Commonwealth of the United States of America. For the avoidance of doubt, I, Charles Wright, will never be a law enforcement officer or agent again. I will neither seek nor accept any such positions.
2. I acknowledge I no longer meet the qualifications to serve as an elected Sheriff as prescribed by South Carolina Code of Laws Section 23-11-110 and am disqualified from pursuing this position for time immemorial.
3. It is my understanding and agreement a copy of this executed agreement will be submitted to the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy ("CJA") and the South Carolina Law

Enforcement Training Council ("LETC") and filed with the Spartanburg County Clerk of Court.

4. I expressly agree to allow CJA and LETC, and/or the 10th Circuit Solicitor's Office, to transmit a copy of this agreement and/or arrest records or related court documents, if requested, to any law enforcement agency or any law enforcement training academy should they inquire about future law enforcement employment.
5. It is my understanding the sharing of this document and/or arrest records with other persons or groups for the purpose of preventing my employment in a law enforcement capacity in the State of South Carolina or other State and/or Commonwealth of the United States of America is permitted by S.C. Code Section 17-1-40(C)(1), which states that even expunged records may be distributed or disseminated for "law enforcement or prosecution purposes." I expressly agree dissemination of this agreement and/or other arrest records is permitted, notwithstanding any expungement of the records, if the purpose of the distribution is to prevent future employment in any law enforcement capacity.
6. Finally, I understand that CJA will enter this information into the National Decertification Index.

I have reviewed this agreement with counsel and agree to the same.

Charles Wright
Charles Wright

10/15/2025
Date

12/12/1964
DOB
Greg Harris
Greg Harris, Esq.
Attorney for Defendant

10/16/25
Date

Harold W. Gowdy, III, Esq.
Harold W. Gowdy, III, Esq.
Attorney for Defendant

October 15, 2025
Date

Micah Black
Micah Black
Solicitor, 10th Circuit

10/27/25
Date

SPARTANBURG COUNTY
CLERK OF COURT
AMY W. COX

2025 OCT 29 AM 9:46

FILED

A CERTIFIED COPY
Amy W. Cox
CLERK OF COURT
SPARTANBURG COUNTY
BY: Spilgriff D.C.
DATED 10/29/2025

ANDERSON COUNTY
COURTHOUSE P.O.BOX 8002
ANDERSON, SC 29622
TELEPHONE 864-260-4046
FAX 864-260-4187



OCONEE COUNTY
COURTHOUSE
415 SOUTH PINE STREET
WALHALLA, SC 29691
TELEPHONE 864-638-4294
FAX 864-638-4295

**MICAH E. BLACK
SOLICITOR**

October 29, 2025

Captain Jeff Kindley
South Carolina Law Enforcement Division
37 Villa Road
Suit 402
Greenville South Carolina 29615

RE: Case 2024-03590
Suspect: Charles Wright Jr.
Suspect: Amos Durham

Captain Kindley,

I have completed my review of the investigative file provided to me in this case. I appreciate the thorough work your office and agents have done in this matter. Special Agent Austin Mills and other Investigators at the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division have worked countless hours on this case to expose and uncover the criminal actions of Chuck Wright and Amos Durham. Their work, along with their partners at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the South Carolina State Ethics Commission, uncovered overwhelming evidence that both Wright and Durham committed numerous crimes over the past several years.

Since receiving this case, I have worked closely with prosecutors at the United States Attorney's Office and with your agents to review the evidence and formulate a strategy in prosecuting these defendants. As you know, federal charges have been levied against Mr. Wright, Mr. Durham, and others, for their involvement in these crimes. After careful consideration, we are declining to bring additional state charges for the same criminal conduct committed by Mr. Wright and Mr. Durham. Their willingness to plead guilty and accept responsibility for their crimes in federal court, and the potential penalties they face there, will ensure a swift and just resolution to this case. Additionally, there is a historical precedent in these joint investigations of seeking prosecution in a single forum when defendants are willing to admit to their wrongdoing and plead guilty. Most importantly, the federal courts are better equipped to ensure restitution is paid back to the people of Spartanburg County, as the federal asset forfeiture statute has greater reach than our current state law. In summary, we feel confident in the upcoming federal proceedings and expect justice to be levied accordingly.

In addition to working closely and tirelessly with federal prosecutors to ensure a conviction and sentence against both Mr. Wright and Mr. Durham, we have secured a Relinquishment of Law

Enforcement Certifications Agreement from Mr. Wright. This agreement has been filed with the Spartanburg County Clerk of Court and has been sent to the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy to ensure that Mr. Wright never carries a badge and gun again.

Enclosed, you will find the file as originally submitted to my office. Again, thank you for your handling of this matter. As always, your agents were thorough and professional throughout this investigation, and they are to be commended for their work. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns regarding this matter.

With best regards,



Micah Black
Solicitor, 10th Judicial Circuit

cc. Chief Deputy Attorney General W. Jeffrey Young
Deputy Attorney General Donald J. Zelenka
Solicitor Barry J. Barnette
Special Agent Austin Mills, SLED
Chief Mark Keel, SLED
Meghan Walker Dayson, State Ethics Commission