

State of Minnesota
County of Hennepin

District Court
4th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No. 17A14863
Court File No. 27-CR-17-30436

State of Minnesota,

Plaintiff,

vs.

MAI VU VANG DOB: 04/05/1969

5140 JAMES AVE N
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Warrant

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I

Charge: Theft-By Swindle

Minnesota Statute: 609.52.2(a)(4), with reference to: 609.52.3(5), 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 YEARS AND/OR \$100,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 12/08/2012

Control #(ICR#): 15001162

Charge Description: That on and between 12/8/2012 and 5/19/13 in Hennepin County, Minnesota, MAI VU VANG obtained property or services from M.T., S.X. and S.V. by swindling him or her using artifice, trick, device or other means, and the property or services

had an aggregate value in excess of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000.00).

COUNT II

Charge: Theft-By Swindle

Minnesota Statute: 609.52.2(a)(4), with reference to: 609.52.3(5), 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 YEARS AND/OR \$100,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 04/09/2014

Control #(ICR#): 15001162

Charge Description: That on or between 4/9/2014 to 5/8/14, in Hennepin County, Minnesota, MAI VU VANG obtained property or services from S.X., S.V. and M.T. by swindling him and/or her using artifice, trick, device or other means, and the property or services had an aggregate value in excess of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000.00).

COUNT III

Charge: Theft-By Swindle

Minnesota Statute: 609.52.2(a)(4), with reference to: 609.52.3(5), 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 YEARS AND/OR \$100,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 05/15/2014

Control #(ICR#): 15001162

Charge Description: That on or between 5/15/2014 to 5/23/14 in Hennepin County, Minnesota, MAI VU VANG obtained property or services from S.X. by swindling him/her using artifice, trick, device or other means, and the property or services

had an aggregate value in excess of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000.00).

COUNT IV

Charge: Theft-By Swindle

Minnesota Statute: 609.52.2(a)(4), with reference to: 609.52.3(5), 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 YEARS AND/OR \$100,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 05/24/2014

Control #(ICR#): 15001162

Charge Description: That on or between 5/24/2014 to 6/18/14, in Hennepin County, Minnesota, MAI VU VANG obtained property or services from M.L. and S.X. by swindling him using artifice, trick, device or other means, and the property or services

had an aggregate value in excess of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000.00).

COUNT V

Charge: Theft-By Swindle

Minnesota Statute: 609.52.2(a)(4), with reference to: 609.52.3(5), 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 YEARS AND/OR \$100,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 07/12/2014

Control #(ICR#): 15001162

Charge Description: That on or between 7/12/14 to 8/14/2014, in Hennepin County, Minnesota, MAI VU VANG obtained property or services from S.X., M.T. and C.Y. by swindling him or her using artifice, trick, device or other means, and the property or services

had an aggregate value in excess of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000.00).)

COUNT VI

Charge: Theft-By Swindle

Minnesota Statute: 609.52.2(a)(4), with reference to: 609.52.3(5), 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 YEARS AND/OR \$100,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 09/23/2014

Control #(ICR#): 15001162

Charge Description: That on or between 9/23/2014 to 10/28/14, in Hennepin County, Minnesota, MAI VU VANG obtained property or services from (victim) by swindling him/her using artifice, trick, device or other means, and the property or services

had an aggregate value in excess of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000.00.)

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

Complainant has investigated the facts and circumstances of this offense and believes the following establishes probable cause:

Complainant reports that he is a special agent with the Minnesota Department of Commerce Fraud Bureau (CFB). He was assigned to investigate an investment fraud originally reported to the Fridley Police Department. The suspect was identified as MAI VU VANG, Defendant herein. Complainant conducted his investigation by reviewing Fridley Police reports, contacting and interviewing victims, executing search warrants and conducting analysis of bank accounts controlled by Defendant. Complainant also reviewed documents and video provided by several of the victims. Additionally, Complainant contacted authorities in Wisconsin including the Ginseng Board of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection.

Complainant reports that Defendant orchestrated an investment fraud scheme wherein she convinced several members of the Minnesota Hmong community to invest in a ginseng farm she allegedly owned near Wausau, Wisconsin. In all of the transactions, the victims gave Defendant cash in exchange for the yield of ginseng at harvest time. The cost to the investors varied from \$3,500.00 to \$4,000.00 per acre. Defendant told the victims that she knew a buyer from China and at harvest time the buyer would purchase the ginseng from the investors. Defendant convinced the investors that at harvest time the ginseng would be worth \$75,000.00 per acre, thus leading to a significant profit for the investor. In some cases, the victims believed they were buying the land itself that had been planted with ginseng and in some cases the victims believed they were buying the crop itself but not the land. Defendant sometimes provided receipts for the cash payments.

Complainant reports that Defendant insisted on cash payments. She told some of the victims that she was going through a divorce and needed money. Defendant told most of the victims that she had cancer and was dying. She told some that she needed to pay back taxes on the ginseng farm. She told one victim that she needed the money because she was traveling to Jerusalem to sell some property there. Some of the victims were members of a church Defendant joined while others were acquaintances.

Complainant reports that the transactions occurred from 2012 through 2014. After analysis, Complainant has determined the following:

Count I

December 8, 2012, through May 19, 2013

1. Defendant took four cash payments from M.T., a known adult female, at M.T.'s home located in Brooklyn Center in Hennepin County, Minnesota. The total was \$18,000.
2. Defendant took one cash payment from S.V. and T.V., a known adult married couple. This couple run the church Defendant attended. The payment was \$24,000 and occurred in St. Paul.
3. Defendant took one cash payment from S.X., a known adult male, at his home located in Brooklyn Center, Hennepin County, Minnesota. The payment was \$15,000.

The total loss during this time period was \$58,000. The victims gave Defendant the money based on her representations as noted above.

Uncharged

Complainant reports that from July 5, 2013, through November 21, 2013, Defendant took additional money

from the above listed victims totaling \$14,500. Complainant notes that this theft is outside the statute of limitations.

Count II

April 9, 2014, through May 8, 2014

1. Defendant took one cash payment from S.V. and T.V. totaling \$3,000.
2. Defendant took one cash payment from M.T. totaling \$2,000. M.T. gave Defendant the money while Defendant was at M.T.'s home in Brooklyn Center.
3. Defendant took four cash payments from S.X. while at his home in Brooklyn Center. The total was \$36,600.

The total loss for this time period was \$41,600. The victims were induced to give Defendant the money based on her representations.

Count III

May 15, 2014, through May 23, 2014

Defendant took four cash payments from S.X. totaling \$39,000. The payments were made at S.X.'s home in Brooklyn Center.

Count IV

May 24, 2014, through June 18, 2014

1. Defendant took two cash payments from M.L., a known adult male. The total was \$24,500.
2. Defendant took six cash payments from S.X. at his home in Brooklyn Center. The total of these payments was \$13,250.

The total loss was \$37,750.

Count V

July 12, 2014 through August 26, 2014

1. Defendant took one cash payment from M.T. totaling \$21,500. This occurred at M.T.'s home in Brooklyn Center.
2. Defendant took one cash payment from C.Y., a known adult male, for \$17,500. This occurred at C.Y.'s Minneapolis home. J.Y., a known adult female married to C.Y., was also present and provided some of the money. C.Y. and J.Y. cashed in retirement accounts to make this investment. J.Y. suffers from the aftereffects of polio and was hoping to quit work based on the return on this investment.
3. Defendant took two cash payments from S.X. at his home in Brooklyn Center. The total was \$3,100.

The total loss for this time period was \$42,100. The victims gave the money to Defendant based on her representations.

Count VI

September 23, 2014, through October 28, 2014

1. Defendant took one cash payment from M.L. for \$12,000.
2. Defendant took one cash payment from C.Y. and J.Y. for \$49,000. J.Y. wrote a contract for the money, which Defendant signed. This occurred in Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota.
3. Defendant took two cash payments from P.T. and B.T., a known adult married couple. The total was

\$178,000. P.T. and B.T. are associated with a church that Defendant attended. They gave Defendant their life savings.

The total loss for this time period was \$239,000. The victims gave the money to Defendant based on her statements to them about the investment.

Complainant reports that on March 29, 2016, he contacted Anne Buntrock at the Ginseng Board of Wisconsin. The Board registers ginseng growers and farms in the state. After providing Buntrock with Defendant's information, Buntrock stated that she found no record of Defendant being a ginseng grower in the State of Wisconsin. Complainant contacted Stacie Ashby at the Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection and learned that all cultivated ginseng growers and dealers in the state receive a registration number and a card. After checking the state records under Defendant's name and address, Ashby found no record of Defendant being a ginseng grower or dealer.

Complainant reports that he reviewed information provided by Mystic Lake Casino. This included a photocopy of Defendant's Minnesota driver's license, her profile, and her Report Action Totals. The record showed that from January 1, 2012, through the end of 2014, Defendant's buy in at the casino totaled \$1,001,917.00. A buy in is defined as the amount a player used to buy chips or uses at the slot machines. Defendant's buy in increased each year as she took money from the victims. In 2012, her buy in was \$74,710. In 2013, it was \$262,527.00 and in 2014, it was \$664,680.00. Complainant also reports that he reviewed information from Running Aces Harness Park, another gambling establishment. In October, 2014, Defendant spent \$27,130.00 there.

Complainant reports that he has tried to locate Defendant without success. He has reason to believe that she is in the State of Georgia and would not respond to a summons. Complainant respectfully requests a warrant.

SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

Complainant

Markham L Stock
Special Agent
85 7th Place East
Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101
Badge: 112

Electronically Signed:
12/04/2017 03:35 PM
Ramsey County, MN

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Prosecuting Attorney

Diane Krenz
300 S 6th St
Minneapolis, MN 55487
(612) 348-5550

Electronically Signed:
12/04/2017 03:31 PM

