

October 29, 2020

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: WINNEBAGO COUNTY CORONER AND WIFE CHARGED WITH FORGERY, OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT AND THEFT

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a Winnebago County grand jury indicted Winnebago County Coroner William Hintz and his wife Michelle Hintz, for stealing government funds, forgery and official misconduct.

William and Michelle Hintz, both 50, face multiple felony charges related to their alleged misuse of Hintz's government credit cards. William Hintz was charged with 37 felony counts, including two counts of theft, which carry a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison; 12 counts of forgery, which carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison; and 23 counts of official misconduct, which also carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

Michelle Hintz faces seven felony counts, including four counts of theft, which carry a maximum sentence of up to seven years in prison; and three counts of unlawful use of a credit card, which carry a maximum sentence of three years in prison. William and Michelle Hintz's next court date is set for Nov. 4.

"Government employees have an obligation to use government funds and property responsibly and this includes elected officials," Raoul said. "Taxpayers must be able to trust that those who they elect to represent them will use that trust for the public good and not to enrich themselves."

The Illinois State Police (ISP) investigated the fraudulent use of a Winnebago County gasoline card and credit card issued to William Hintz, which were to be used for business related to his official duties as the county coroner.

"The Illinois State Police Division of Criminal Investigation is committed to upholding the public trust," ISP Director Brendan Kelly said. "The Special Investigative Unit was created to focus on these very cases with the Attorney General and other partners to protect public integrity."

Raoul alleged that from April 2018 until as recently as July 2020, the couple used county funds for personal expenditures. According to the indictments, Hintz allegedly spent more than \$10,000 on hotel rooms, car rentals, gasoline and tolls unrelated to official county business. Raoul alleged that Michelle Hintz was directly involved with the unauthorized use of her husband's credit cards.

The indictment also alleges William Hintz altered and submitted to the county, various hotel billing statements to support what he purported to be authorized credit card spending. Prior to submission, Hintz allegedly altered bills from stays at a Courtyard by Marriott in Auburn Hills, Mich.; a Courtyard by Marriott in Cranberry, Pa.; a Drury Inn & Suites in Pittsburgh, Pa.; a Holiday Inn Express in Buffalo, NY.; and a Crowne Plaza in Minneapolis, Minn. Raoul alleged Hintz even created a fake agenda as proof of his attendance at a conference in New York to justify his stay in Buffalo earlier in 2020, despite there being no evidence of his actual registration or attendance.

The Attorney General's office is prosecuting the case based on a referral by the Winnebago County State's Attorney's office.

The public is reminded that defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Assistant Attorney General Haley Bookhout is handling the case for Raoul's Public Integrity Bureau, and Assistant Attorney General Jonathan McKay is handling the case for Raoul's Criminal Prosecutions and Trials Assistance Bureau.