

State of Minnesota  
County of Stearns

District Court  
7th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No.  
Court File No.

CR-2017-1442

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**State of Minnesota,**

Plaintiff,

vs.

**ERIC MICHAEL JOHNSON DOB: 12/06/1988**

320 Park Meadows Drive  
#306  
Waite Park, MN 56387

Defendant.

**COMPLAINT**

Summons

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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(3)(a)  
Maximum Sentence: Five (5) years imprisonment and/or \$10,000 fine.  
Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 08/18/2016 to 01/20/2017

Control #(ICR#): 17000287

Charge Description: That the defendant, Eric Michael Johnson, then and there being, did wrongfully, unlawfully and feloniously by swindling, whether by artifice, trick, device or any other means, obtain property or services from another person, and the aggregate value of the property or services stolen was more than \$1,000 but not more than \$5,000.

## STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

The Complainant states that the following facts establish probable cause:

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On February 16, 2017, Minnesota Department of Commerce SA Boche met with R.D.H., fully identified in the police reports, who advised that he was an amateur coin collector and he had purchased a 1909-O Indian Head Half Eagle coin and its Professional Coin Grading Services (PCGS) protective container for \$4,999 plus tax from Pawn America, located on Division Street in the City of St. Cloud, County of Stearns, State of Minnesota. R.D.H. stated that upon returning to his residence he fell on the ice and the top corner of his PCGS container broke off.

R.D.H. advised that on January 14, 2017, he met with Central Lakes Coins and made an arrangement for them to have the coin recertified so that he could attempt to re-sell it on consignment. On January 22, 2017, R.D.H. received a call from Central Lakes Coins and they advised him that the coin was a counterfeit. R.D.H. stated he attempted to return the coin to Pawn America, however they refused to take it back due to the now broken PCGS container. SA Boche reviewed the Indian Head Half Eagle Coin and its PCGS holder, he found the font on the PCGS holder did not appear to be authentic as it was too wide and not as crisp as an actual PCGS holder is. SA Boche reviewed the coin and found that it appeared counterfeit as the "O" mintmark was not in the correct font. When SA Boche compared the coin and PCGS holder to a photo of an authentic coin and holder from 2006 he found that the holder R.D.H. had received was obviously not the same as the photo depicted. SA Boche then checked the coin on a precious metal verifier and determined it was not the correct composition of gold.

SA Boche checked the Automated Pawn System (APS) and learned that the coin had been sold to Pawn America by Eric Michael Johnson, D.O.B. 12/6/1988, the defendant herein. SA Boche also learned that the defendant had sold several other numismatic coins to the Pawn America stores in the Cities of St. Cloud and Anoka, as well as at Max It Pawn, located in the City of St. Cloud, since June of 2016.

On February 23, 2017, SA Boche met with P.O., fully identified in the police reports, the Store Manager of Pawn America, located on West Main Street, in the City of Anoka, County of Anoka, State of Minnesota, regarding the three transactions that had been identified as being completed in their store by the defendant. P.O. provided documentation to SA Boche of these transactions. SA Boche learned that on January 2, 2017, the defendant sold a 1929 Indian Head Half Eagle MS62 in a PCGS holder, serial no. 14160251 to them for \$241.50, and a 1902 S Liberty Head Gold Eagle MS63 in NGC holder, serial no. 3836048003 for \$426.50. SA Boche learned that if the Indian Head Half Eagle coin were authentic its value would be approximately \$42,500, and if the Liberty Head Gold Eagle were authentic its value would be approximately \$1,250. SA Boche later seized these coins and after examining them, he determined they were counterfeit. P.O. then advised the defendant had also sold them a 2014 Gold Eagle coin in a NGC holder, serial no. 3974356215 for \$801.50, on January 20, 2017. SA Boche examined the 2014 Gold Eagle and found that it did not pass the precious metal verifier and was not secure in its holder. SA Boche also observed the NGC holder was missing its security features and determined both the coin and the holder were counterfeit. P.O. stated that he had been personally involved in all of the transactions with the defendant and had identified him by his Minnesota Driver's License for each one. P.O. also provided video surveillance to SA Boche for the January 20, 2017 transaction, and SA Boche compared the male in the surveillance to the defendant's DVS photo and found them to be similar. The total aggregate value of the transactions completed by the defendant at the Anoka Pawn America was \$1,469.50.

On February 27, 2017, SA Boche and SA Wilson returned to the Anoka Pawn America to pick up video surveillance and verify the coins that had been sold to them by the defendant on January 2, 2017, with P.O.

While looking at the coins, P.O. was notified by another employee that the defendant was currently there and was attempting to sell a 2009P Australia G\$100 Kangaroo MS 69 in a NGC holder, serial no. 3292654-054. SA Boche was provided this coin and confirmed that the holder and coin were counterfeit as they lacked security features and detail. The defendant had requested \$900 for the coin. While the defendant was completing a purchase agreement with Pawn America for the coin, SA Boche approached him and placed him under arrest. In a Mirandized statement, the defendant provided that he admitted to purchasing the coins on a website called "Aliexpress" and that he had recently purchased the Australia Kangaroo for \$115. The defendant stated he knew the price of gold was about \$40 a gram and claimed to have verified the coins on a book and a website prior to trying to resell them. The defendant admitted to buying the coins to attempt to make a profit and that he was at the Anoka Pawn America because they pay more. The defendant admitted to running the coins by their serial numbers and knew the auction results were posted, but claimed to still believe they were authentic. The defendant acknowledged that if the coins were authentic he would get paid more at a place like the "Gold Guys". The defendant denied possession of any further counterfeit coins at his apartment.

On February 28, 2017, SA Boche and SA Reyerson went to the Pawn America store, located in the City of St. Cloud and met with Store Manager, R.M.T., fully identified in the police reports. R.M.T. provided SA Boche a 2014 E Eagle PF70 in NGC Holder, serial no. 3974356-214, that had been sold by the defendant to them on January 16, 2017, for \$751.50. SA Boche examined the coin and holder and determined they were both counterfeit. R.M.T. also provided SA Boche the surveillance video and receipt from the transaction.

On March 6, 2017, SA Boche received an e-mail from R.M.T. that included a spreadsheet of each of the defendant's transactions at their store, as well as the pawn agreements for each transaction. SA Boche learned that on August 18, 2016, the defendant had pawned a 1929 Indian Head Half Eagle MS62 in PCGS holder, serial no. 14160251 for \$316.50. On October 11, 2016, the defendant sold them a 1909-O \$5 Indian Head AU58 in PCGS holder for \$401.50. This was the coin that had been resold to R.D.H. and had previously been confirmed to be counterfeit, however Pawn America had since contacted him and provided him a full refund. On November 8, 2016, the defendant sold them a 1902-S \$10 Liberty Head MS 65 in NGC holder, serial no. 3310514-010 for \$501.50. All of the coins had been resold to another individual, however Pawn America had contacted them and re-obtained the coin and provided the customers a full refund. The defendant had been identified by his Minnesota Driver's License in each transaction. The total aggregate value of the transactions completed by the defendant at the St. Cloud Pawn America was \$1,971.

On March 9, 2017, SA Boche received a response to a subpoena he had previously served on the Store Manager, B.W., fully identified in the police reports, of Max It Pawn, located on West Division Street, in the City of St. Cloud, County of Stearns, State of Minnesota. SA Boche learned that the defendant had sold a Perth Mint gold bar for \$900 on September 21, 2016. SA Boche recognized this Perth Mint bar as being counterfeit and had previously seized it on February 28, 2017. The defendant's driver's license had been verified in each transaction.

On April 18, 2017, SA Boche met with L.O., fully identified in the police reports, Owner of Greak Lakes Coins. L.O. examined all of the coins and holders seized by SA Boche and confirmed that they were all counterfeit.

The total aggregate value of the transactions completed by the defendant was \$4,340.50.

Complainant has reason to believe and does believe that all of the above information is true and correct.

The above facts constitute your complainant's basis for believing that the above-named defendant, on or

between August 18, 2016, and January 20, 2017, in the Cities of Anoka and St. Cloud, Counties of Anoka and Stearns, State of Minnesota, committed the offenses described herein.

## 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**

Joseph K Boche  
Special Agent  
85 7th Place East  
Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
Badge: 111

Electronically Signed:  
07/31/2017 07:37 AM  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

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

**Prosecuting Attorney**

Kevin M. Voss  
Assistant County Attorney  
705 Courthouse Square  
St. Cloud, MN 56303  
(320) 656-3880

Electronically Signed:  
07/28/2017 02:48 PM

**FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant's arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or Defendant's detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense(s).

**SUMMONS**

THEREFORE YOU, THE DEFENDANT, ARE SUMMONED to appear on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM before the above-named court at 725 Courthouse Square, St. Cloud, MN 56303 to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

**WARRANT**

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

*Execute in MN Only*

*Execute Nationwide*

*Execute in Border States*

**ORDER OF DETENTION**

Since the Defendant is already in custody, I order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: \$  
Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to or signed under penalty of perjury, is issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer as of the following date: July 31, 2017.

**Judicial Officer**

Mary B Mahler  
Stearns County District Court Judge

Electronically Signed: 07/31/2017 04:19 PM

Sworn testimony has been given before the Judicial Officer by the following witnesses:

**COUNTY OF STEARNS  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**State of Minnesota**

Plaintiff

vs.

**Eric Michael Johnson**

Defendant

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RETURN OF SERVICE**  
*I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this  
Summons upon the Defendant herein named.*

Signature of Authorized Service Agent: