

FEB 13 2020

STATE GRAND JURY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

v.

ROBERT ANDERSON
STRICKLAND, JR.

Defendant.

Case No. **2020-GS-47-03**JAMES R. PARKS
CLERK, STATE GRAND JURY

**INDICTMENT FOR MISCONDUCT IN
OFFICE; USE OF OFFICIAL POSITION OR
OFFICE FOR FINANCIAL GAIN;
EMBEZZLEMENT; USE OF PUBLIC
FUNDS, PROPERTY, OR TIME TO
INFLUENCE ELECTION; AND
UNLAWFUL DRUGS**

At a session of the State Grand Jury of South Carolina, convened in Columbia, South Carolina, on February 13, 2020, the State Grand Jurors present upon their oath and charge as follows:

**COUNT ONE
MISCONDUCT IN OFFICE
Common Law**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about January 1, 2016 until on or about November 30, 2019, and while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, a public official, did willfully and dishonestly fail to properly and faithfully discharge the duties of his public office imposed upon him by law; to wit: While Sheriff, STRICKLAND spent time during the regular workday, and did have subordinate deputies and sheriff's office staff spend time during their regular workdays while on duty and being paid by the county, doing work for and improvements to STRICKLAND's home, land, and other properties or businesses at least in part owned or controlled by STRICKLAND, and doing other work for STRICKLAND's personal

benefit or on STRICKLAND's personal property. Therefore, STRICKLAND did, by malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance, commit acts and omissions in breach of his duty of good faith, honesty, and accountability to the public.

All in violation of the Common Law of South Carolina, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT TWO
USE OF OFFICIAL POSITION OR OFFICE FOR FINANCIAL GAIN
ETHICS ACT VIOLATION
(S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-700)**

That from on or about January 1, 2016 until on or about November 30, 2019 ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. did, in Colleton County, while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself; to wit: STRICKLAND used his position as elected Sheriff of Colleton County to get free labor performed on his personal property and for his personal benefit or businesses by subordinate deputies and staff who depended on STRICKLAND's good graces for their continued employment. From this activity STRICKLAND received an economic benefit distinct from that of the general public of more than fifty dollars.

This done in violation of section 8-13-720 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina; such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT THREE
EMBEZZLEMENT
(S.C. Code Ann. § 16-13-210)**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, on or about January 1, 2016 until on or about November 30, 2019, while STRICKLAND as the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, was responsible for the safekeeping, transfer and disbursement of public funds, did embezzle and convert to his own use less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of the public funds, with the intention to defraud the citizens of Colleton County, to wit:

While Sheriff of Colleton County, and thus responsible for the funds entrusted to him for operation of necessary police services as well as for the employment of the deputies and staff subordinate to him, STRICKLAND did have Sheriff's Office deputies and staff performing services for him, his businesses, and on his property for his personal benefit during the work hours of those deputies and staff, and thus did convert to his own use the wages paid from public funds to those deputies and staff.

All in violation of section 16-13-210 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended; and such conduct involving public corruption or arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT FOUR
MISCONDUCT IN OFFICE
Common Law**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about March of 2018 until on or about November 30, 2019, and while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, a public official, did willfully and dishonestly fail to properly and faithfully discharge the duties of his public office imposed upon him by law; to wit: While Sheriff, STRICKLAND gave a governmental radio unit, worth approximately \$3000, and which had access to secure first responder communication channels, to a citizen, with no valid official purpose for providing this county property to the citizen. Therefore, STRICKLAND did, by malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance, commit acts and omissions in breach of his duty of good faith, honesty, and accountability to the public.

All in violation of the Common Law of South Carolina, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT FIVE
MISCONDUCT IN OFFICE
Common Law**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about January 1, 2016 until on or about November 30, 2019, and while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, a public official, did willfully and dishonestly fail to properly and faithfully discharge the duties of his public office imposed upon him by law; to wit: While Sheriff, STRICKLAND used county property, including but not limited to vehicles,

an off-road vehicle, and tools, for his personal benefit and for personal work on his properties and businesses. Therefore, STRICKLAND. did, by malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance, commit acts and omissions in breach of his duty of good faith, honesty, and accountability to the public.

All in violation of the Common Law of South Carolina, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT SIX
USE OF OFFICIAL POSITION OR OFFICE FOR FINANCIAL GAIN
ETHICS ACT VIOLATION
(S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-700)**

That from on or about January 1, 2016 until on or about November 30, 2019 ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. did, in Colleton County, while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself; to wit: STRICKLAND used his position as elected Sheriff of Colleton County to have county property, such as vehicles, an off-road vehicle, and tools, used on and for the benefit of his personal property and businesses. From this activity STRICKLAND received an economic benefit distinct from that of the general public of more than fifty dollars.

This done in violation of the section 8-13-720 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina; such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT SEVEN
MISCONDUCT IN OFFICE
Common Law**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about some time in August of 2016 until on or about some time in November of 2016, and while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, a public official, did willfully and dishonestly fail to properly and faithfully discharge the duties of his public office imposed upon him by law; to wit: While Sheriff, and actively campaigning for reelection as Sheriff, STRICKLAND spent time during the regular workday working on his political campaign, and did have subordinate deputies and sheriff's office staff working on his political campaign during their regular workdays, while they were on duty and being paid by the county, and did cause governmental resources to be used for his campaign related activities. Therefore, STRICKLAND did, by malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance, commit acts and omissions in breach of his duty of good faith, honesty, and accountability to the public.

All in violation of the Common Law of South Carolina, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT EIGHT
EMBEZZLEMENT
(S.C. Code Ann. § 16-13-210)**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about some time in August of 2016 until on or about some time in November of 2016, while STRICKLAND, as the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, was responsible for the safekeeping, transfer and disbursement of public funds, did embezzle and convert to his own use less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of the public funds, with the intention to defraud the citizens of Colleton County, to wit:

While Sheriff of Colleton County, and thus responsible for the funds entrusted to him for operation of necessary police services as well as for the employment of the deputies and staff subordinate to him, STRICKLAND did have Sheriff's Office deputies and staff performing services for his political campaign during the work hours of those deputies and staff, and thus did convert to his campaign's use the wages paid from public funds to those deputies and staff.

All in violation of section 16-13-210 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended; and such conduct involving public corruption or arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

COUNT NINE
USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS, PROPERTY, OR TIME TO INFLUENCE ELECTION:
ETHICS ACT VIOLATION
(S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-1346)

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR, in Colleton County, from on or about some time in August of 2016 until on or about some time in November of 2016, did use and authorize the use of public funds, property, and time to influence the outcome of an election; to wit:

While Sheriff of Colleton County, STRICKLAND did authorize and direct sheriff's office deputies and staff to use time while being paid by the county to work on his reelection campaign, and did similarly authorize and direct the use of county resources and property for the benefit of his reelection campaign.

All in violation of Section 8-13-1346, of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of the State, and contrary to statute in such case made and provided.

COUNT TEN
MISCONDUCT IN OFFICE
Common Law

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about June of 2019 until about September of 2019, and while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, a public official, did willfully and dishonestly fail to properly and faithfully discharge the duties of his public office imposed upon him by law; to wit: While STRICKLAND was the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, STRICKLAND did cause

public funds of Colleton County to be spent on non-official lodging expenses during a law enforcement conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Therefore, STRICKLAND did, by malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance, commit acts and omissions in breach of his duty of good faith, honesty, and accountability to the public.

All in violation of the Common Law of South Carolina, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT ELEVEN
EMBEZZLEMENT
(S.C. Code Ann. § 16-13-210)**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about June of 2019 until about September of 2019, while STRICKLAND as the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, was responsible for the safekeeping, transfer and disbursement of public funds, did embezzle and convert to his own use less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of the public funds, with the intention to defraud the citizens of Colleton County, to wit:

While Sheriff, STRICKLAND did obtain payment from the public funds of Colleton County for non-official lodging expenses during a trip to a law enforcement conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and such an expenditure was an improper personal use of public money.

All in violation of section 16-13-210 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as

amended; and such conduct involving public corruption or arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT TWELVE
MISCONDUCT IN OFFICE
Common Law**

That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR. in Colleton County, from on or about September of 2016 until on or about September of 2018, and while the elected Sheriff of Colleton County, a public official, did willfully and dishonestly fail to properly and faithfully discharge the duties of his public office imposed upon him by law; to wit: While Sheriff, STRICKLAND did use his supervisory power over the employment and wages of sheriff's office staff to coerce the continuation of an ongoing sexual relationship with a subordinate, and did use county resources and time to further these activities. Therefore, STRICKLAND did, by malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance, commit acts and omissions in breach of his duty of good faith, honesty, and accountability to the public.

All in violation of the Common Law of South Carolina, and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption and such conduct not having been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.


COUNT THIRTEEN
DISTRIBUTION OF A SCHEDULE II CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE
(S.C. Code Ann. § 44-53-370(b)(2))


That ROBERT ANDERSON STRICKLAND, JR., did in Colleton County, on or about September of 2018, knowingly and intentionally distribute, dispense, and/or deliver; or did aid, abet, attempt, or conspire to distribute, dispense, and/or deliver, a quantity of ADDERALL, a Schedule II controlled substance under the provisions of § 44-53-110, *et. seq.*, Code of Laws of South Carolina (1976), as amended.

All in violation of S.C. Code Ann. § 44-53-370 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, and such conduct not having been authorized by law; and such conduct involving public corruption and arising out of or in connection with a crime involving public corruption.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

A True Bill


FOREPERSON


ALAN WILSON (scw)
ATTORNEY GENERAL