

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

FILED

JUN 16 2026

U.S. DISTRICT COURT
ELKINS WV 26241

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

v.

BARBARA G. GOODEN and
LISA L. FRENCH,

Defendants.

Criminal 3:26cr33

Violations: 18 U.S.C. § 2
18 U.S.C. § 1344
18 U.S.C. § 1349

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury charges that:

Introduction

1. The Berkeley County Sheriff’s Office in the Tax Office (“BCSO Tax Office”) is responsible for collecting state, county, municipal, and school taxes, including personal property taxes for vehicles. Berkeley County residents frequently make tax payments at the office in cash.

2. The BCSO Tax Office also administers the financial affairs of adults for whom the Sheriff has been appointed a conservator. Under West Virginia law, conservator accounts are established for adults who lack the mental capacity to manage their own affairs (“protected adults”) and have no other person to assist with those responsibilities.

3. As one of its primary duties for conservatorships, the BCSO Tax Office manages bank accounts for protected adults. The Sheriff has exclusive signature authority for those bank accounts.

4. At all relevant times, the defendants, **BARBARA G. GOODEN** and **LISA L. FRENCH**, were employed at the BCSO Tax Office. **BARBARA G. GOODEN** served as the Chief Tax Deputy, and **LISA L. FRENCH** served as the Floor Supervisor. **LISA L. FRENCH** managed conservator bank accounts under **BARBARA G. GOODEN**’s supervision.

COUNT ONE

(Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud)

1. Paragraphs 1 through 4 of the Introduction above are incorporated herein by reference as if repeated and re-alleged in full.

2. From in or around 2007, until October 2024, in Berkeley County, in the Northern District of West Virginia, defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** knowingly and intentionally conspired and agreed to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud financial institutions and to obtain moneys, funds, credits, assets, and securities, owned by and under the custody and control of financial institutions, by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344.

Object of the Conspiracy

3. The object of the conspiracy was for defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** to embezzle and misappropriate tax payments and funds from financial accounts administered by the BCSO.

Manner and Means of the Conspiracy

4. It was part of the conspiracy that the defendants stole United States currency collected from Berkeley County taxpayers by the BCSO.

5. It was further part of the conspiracy that, to offset and conceal the United States currency stolen from BCSO payments, the defendants fraudulently issued checks from conservatorship and estate accounts to other accounts maintained by the BCSO. These fraudulent checks were made payable to the “Berkeley County Sheriff & Treasurer,” issued in amounts corresponding to the stolen cash, and deposited with other BCSO collections.

6. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendant **LISA L. FRENCH** fraudulently issued checks from conservator accounts to a private business that she operated and paid for personal expenses directly out of some conservator accounts.

7. It was further part of the conspiracy that the defendants used the Sheriff's signature stamp for the fraudulent checks without authorization.

8. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** split the money embezzled from the BCSO Tax Office.

9. As a result of the conspiracy, defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** embezzled and misappropriated more than \$3 million.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349.

COUNTS TWO THROUGH FIVE

(Bank Fraud)

1. Paragraphs 1 through 4 of the Introduction and paragraphs 2 through 9 of Count One above are incorporated herein by reference as if repeated and re-alleged in full.

2. From in or around 2003 until October 2024, in Berkeley County, in the Northern District of West Virginia, and elsewhere, defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** knowingly and intentionally devised a scheme and artifice to defraud financial institutions and to obtain moneys, funds, credits, assets, and securities, owned by and under the custody and control of financial institutions, by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises.

3. As part of the scheme, defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** abused their positions of trust at the BCSO to steal money entrusted to that office, primarily from conservator bank accounts.

4. It was further a part of the scheme that defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** fraudulently issued checks from conservator accounts.

5. It was further a part of the scheme that defendant **LISA L. FRENCH** fraudulently expended funds from conservator accounts to pay for personal expenses.

6. In total, defendants **BARBARA G. GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH** conducted more than 700 fraudulent transactions (including more than 550 forged checks), withdrawing substantial sums of money from at least 59 conservator bank accounts.

7. On or about the dates below, for the purpose of executing, and attempting to execute, the scheme and artifice to defraud financial institutions and to obtain moneys, funds, credits, assets, and securities, owned by and under the custody and control of those financial institutions by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, defendants **BARBARA G.**

GOODEN and LISA L. FRENCH knowingly and intentionally committed the following acts, each constituting a separate count:

COUNT	DATE	CRIMINAL ACT
Two	9/25/2019	Check issued to Berkeley County Sheriff & Treasurer for \$3663.01 from conservator bank account for J.B.J.
Three	12/18/2023	Check issued to Hot Press & More for \$650 from conservator bank account for C.M.H.
Four	5/2/2024	Check issued to Berkeley County Sheriff & Treasurer for \$4141.11 from conservator bank account for S.M.
Five	5/3/2024	Check issued to Berkeley County Sheriff & Treasurer for \$6475.02 from conservator bank account for M.J.P.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1344 and 2.

FORFEITURE ALLEGATION

1. Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(2), and Title 21, United States Code, Section 853, upon obtaining a conviction with respect to an offense charged in Counts One through Five of the Indictment, in which a defendant is charged with bank fraud conspiracy and bank fraud, it is the intention of the United States to seek at sentencing the forfeiture of any property constituting, or derived from, proceeds obtained directly or indirectly, as the result of the commission of the offense, including a money judgment in the amount of at least, including a money judgment of at least \$2,737,932.

2. Pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), the government will seek forfeiture of substitute property up to the value of property subject to direct forfeiture that is not available for forfeiture on account of any act or omission contemplated by Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p)(1).

A true bill,

/s/ _____
Grand Jury Foreperson

/s/ _____
MATTHEW L. HARVEY
United States Attorney

Andrew R. Cogar
Assistant United States Attorney

Morgan S. McKee
Assistant United States Attorney