



the same, Affiant makes the allegations hereinafter set forth:

On or about June 8, 2014, Agent Shane Murray of the Office of Special Investigations at Malmstrom Airforce Base contacted Detective Corneliusen of the Cascade County Sheriff's Office. An active duty member, S.G., had made a complaint that she had been sexually assaulted while receiving a massage at the Malmstrom Air Force Base Gym. Gene Watson, the Defendant herein, is a licensed masseuse who contracts to perform massages at the gym on base (Big Sky Massage LLC). On June 9, 2014, S.G. made the following disclosure to Detective Corneliusen:

- On May 30, 2014, S.G. received a massage at the Malmstrom Air Force Base gym by the Defendant.
- The massage was scheduled to be one-hour long. The massage room is set up behind the Defendant's office in the gym.
- S.G. had received a previous massage from the Defendant at the gym. She had also received several massages from students of the Defendant at the Salon Academy of Great falls.
- S.G. was unclothed, except for underwear and bra, and covered with a sheet for modesty.
- The pre-massage conversation identified areas S.G. wanted the Defendant to focus on during the massage.
- The Defendant first started S.G.'s massage with her lying on her stomach. The Defendant massaged S.G.'s back and legs.
- The Defendant inquired as to whether S.G. wanted him to work her "glutes" (buttock muscles). S.G. replied, "sure".
- The Defendant pulled down S.G.'s underwear to mid-thigh and proceeded to massage the muscles running from the upper thigh to the back.
- The Defendant then put his hand inside the leg on S.G.'s upper thigh and asked about a particular ligament and whether it felt tight or tender.
- S.G. replied that she didn't feel anything and didn't need him to work there.
- S.G. was astonished. She asked the Defendant to move on elsewhere with the massage.

- S.G. has had several massages (75-100) and had never experienced a masseuse do that to her.
- S.G. maneuvered onto her back on the table and the Defendant started massaging her leg and stomach muscles. He then moved to massaging her shoulders.
- While massaging S.G.'s shoulders, the Defendant stated, "I've been doing this so long; they're [breasts] just bags of skin and fat to me."
- While standing at S.G.'s head, the Defendant started working the pectoral muscles that go from the front of the shoulder to the armpit.
- The Defendant used the heel of his hand and worked toward the armpit.
- While doing so, the sheet came off of S.G.'s chest, exposing her breasts.
- S.G. pulled the sheet back up, recovering herself.
- When the Defendant was bringing his hands back up from S.G.'s armpits, his hands ran over the top of her breasts, touching her nipples. The contact was skin to skin.
- S.G. was shocked and uncertain why the Defendant had touched her breasts.
- While cleaning herself with a towel shortly after the massage was complete, S.G. observed massage oil on her breasts and nipples.
- S.G. vowed never to get a massage from the Defendant again.
- After conferring with a family member, who is a licensed masseuse, S.G. became reassured that neither of these assaults would be considered inadvertent.
- S.G. filed a criminal complaint against the Defendant.
- S.G. reflected how both sexual assaults were smooth, sly, and subtle, leading her to believe they were calculated and not the first time this had occurred.
- S.G. also filed a complaint with the Department of Labor.

S.G.'s interview was downloaded and entered into evidence. S.G. also provided a written statement, which is in evidence.

On June 11, 2014, Detective Corneliusen contacted Mike McPherson, the owner of the Academy of Salons. In addition to his contract with Malmstrom Airforce Base, the Defendant was a massage therapist instructor at the Salon Academy. Detective Corneliusen inquired into whether there had been any complaints against the Defendant. Mr. McPherson stated that the only complaint

he knew of included an inappropriate joke to students (non-sexual in nature).

Detective Corneliusen contacted Michael Eayrs, former State Chairman for the Montana Board of Massage, to request a professional review of the criminal complaint. On July 28, 2014, Detective Corneliusen received a written opinion from Mr. Eayrs. He made the following conclusions:

- Underwear Issue:
  - In most massage sessions, the patient does not wear underwear. When a patient chooses to wear his or her underwear, this is considered non-verbal communication, in other words, the patient desires his or her privacy to be respected. The therapist should respect the patient's choice.
  - Massaging the gluteal region is a typical massage procedure. Whether the patient is wearing or not wearing underwear, the therapist protects the patient's modesty by draping in such a way as to keep the gluteal cleft and the opposite side of the buttocks covered by the drape.
  - Pulling the underwear to mid-thigh is not appropriate unless verbally agreed upon between patient and therapist. There is no practical reason for pulling the underwear to mid-thigh. For most people, this would be embarrassing to both the patient and the therapist.
- Upper, Inner Thigh Issue:
  - Without a better description of the area touched, whether it was skin to skin (should be done through a sheet), and a better description of the communication between the therapist and patient, no opinions could be made regarding this issue.
- Massage Sheet Issue:
  - The incident of the slipping of the sheet, revealing S.G.'s breasts, could have been an accident. However, students are taught a procedure in placing the sheet to minimize the chances of this occurring.
- Hands Touching Breast Issue
  - Breast massage is influenced by the culture of the region. While there are cultural influences that address breast massages, there is no Montana law prohibiting breast massage (though sexual intent

is prohibited). However, unless the therapist received consent from the patient to do a breast massage, it was unethical, disrespectful, and a sexual act to do so.

- Therapist's Statement:
  - The Defendant's statement about breasts being "just bags of skin and fat to me" was rude, unprofessional, unethical, and inappropriate.

On August 8, 2014, Agent Murray contacted Detective Corneliusen to inform him that he had identified two more individuals who had been victimized during one of the Defendant's massages. These individuals are S.R. and C.P, who both provided written statements as the events that had occurred. C.P. believed the touching of her vagina could have been unintentional, but stated she would not return to the Defendant for further massage services. C.P.s last massage occurred on March 29, 2014.

S.R. disclosed the following:

- S.R. began getting massages from the Defendant about two years prior (2012). She received massages every month or so.
- The Defendant was initially professional, but progressively became less professional and more evasive in his massaging therapy and verbal communications.
- S.R.'s last massage was in May or June of 2014.
- During the last massage, the Defendant began massaging S.R.'s "glutes" (buttock muscles) without her instruction.
- The Defendant commented about dealing with a "hot" yoga instructor
- The Defendant commented that not all of his clients were "nice, clean, and in shape like her."
- During the last massage, the Defendant massaged S.R.'s muscles along her breasts, and kept rubbing her nipples with his knuckles and cupping her breasts.
- The Defendant further made inquiries into her breast exams and reached his hand onto her sternum.

- S.R. experienced great emotional discomfort and decided to never get a massage from the Defendant again.

Detective Corneliusen abstained from further investigation pending investigation by the Department of Labor Licensure Board. An investigative subpoena was prepared by the Cascade County Attorney's Office to receive a copy of the Department of Labor's investigation and determination.

The Screening Panel of the Board of Massage Therapy reviewed the Department of Labor and Industry's investigation report regarding the Defendant during a meeting on February 9, 2015. The screening panel found reasonable cause to believe the Defendant had violated statutes and rules governing the practice of massage therapy and that those violations justify license disciplinary action.

In early April, 2018, an article appeared in the Great Falls Tribune regarding the Defendant's sexual assault of multiple students at the Montana Academy of Salons.

On April 11, 2018, Detective Corneliusen was informed of a complaint taken by the Great Falls Police Department. C.B. had seen the newspaper article regarding the Defendant, and decided to come forward with what had happened to her. She disclosed that the Defendant had raped her on two occasions: once at her home in Great Falls and once at his office on Malmstrom Air Force Base. The rapes occurred in February and April of 2014. Sergeant Otto forwarded the complaint to the Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

On June 2, 2018, Detective Corneliusen received additional information that

an additional victim of the Defendant had been identified by the Department of Labor, L.V. L.V. knew the Defendant from being a student at the Salon Academy in 2014. Shortly after the death of her husband, the Defendant offered her a free massage. He raped her at his office in the gym on Malmstrom Air Force Base in March of 2014. L.V. had seen the article in the Great Falls Tribune Article and filed a complaint with the Board of Massage Therapy on April 9, 2018.

The investigation into the Defendant was reopened by Detective Corneliusen of the Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

A phone interview of L.V. was conducted on June 28, 2018. During the interview L.V. disclosed the following:

- L.V. knew the Defendant as a massage therapy instructor at the Salon Academy.
- L.V. was a student at the school for cosmetology and had been since the previous January.
- L.V. described the Defendant as flirtatious with the younger girls.
- L.V. had previously received massages from other places, as well as the Salon Academy. L.V. has back and shoulder pains and massage therapy assists with those problems.
- One time, a student was providing L.V. a massage, during which the Defendant came in and assisted with massaging L.V.'s shoulders. The Defendant was professional during this encounter.
- On March 12, 2014, L.V.'s husband was found dead at their home, leaving L.V. and her children in despair.
- L.V.'s husband was buried on March 18, 2018.
- 3 days later, the Defendant contacted L.V., wanting to say, "hi And hope you have a great day". *[Sic]*
- During the text exchange, the Defendant offered L.V. a free massage. Arrangements were made for a massage at the gym on base (photographs of the text messages were taken and entered into evidence).
- At approximately 12:00 p.m. on March 21, 2018., L.V. had her son, J.O., an active duty navy member who was home for his father's funeral, drive her onto Malmstrom Airforce Base and to the gym where the Defendant had his office.

- L.V. found the gym and navigated her way through the building to the Defendant's therapy office.
- The Defendant had told L.V. not to sign in and to sneak by the check-in desk or she would have to pay for the massage.
- L.V. accurately described the layout of the Defendant's office and massage room.
- L.V. undressed, covered herself with the sheet provided, and laid down on her front side on the table.
- Once the Defendant entered the room, L.V. informed him that she had a lot of shoulder tension from the recent stress of her husband's death and school.
- The Defendant disregarded her comments and started massaging her legs and thighs.
- This made L.V. confused, as with most massages, they would start with the shoulders.
- As the Defendant was moving his hands to her upper leg area, he asked L.V. if she "liked it?"
- L.V. said nothing to him and hoped he would stop and move to her shoulders.
- The Defendant then proceeded to get on top of her and rape her.
- L.V. was in disbelief and felt helpless and defeated.
- She recalled wondering how she deserved this, why she was being punished, and what had she done to deserve this after the loss of her husband.
- L.V. was uncertain whether the Defendant ejaculated, but remembered it taking a long time and wishing it would be over.
- After the Defendant finished, he massaged her shoulders for a short time, then left the room.
- L.V. was in a daze, got up, got dressed, and left the room.
- The Defendant acted as nothing had happened.
- L.V. could not look at the Defendant and left the building.
- L.V. blocked out the assault to focus on the next few weeks.
- When L.V. restarted training at the Salon Academy in the fall of 2014, she heard rumors of numerous girls quitting the school because of the Defendant's inappropriate behavior.
- The Defendant had attempted to befriend L.V. by texting her about work, wages and other problems at the Salon.
- The Defendant texted her and stated "holler at me if need another "deeptissue" massage ☺" [*sic*] (photograph of text messages taken and entered into evidence).
- L.V. told the owners of the Salon Academy, Mike and Linda McPherson, the details of the sexual assault.
- The McPherson's later came to L.V. and told her that the Defendant had denied it happening. She was threatened with a defamation law suit should L.V. pursue her allegations any further.

- After contacting the Department of Labor Board and receiving instructions on how to file a complaint, L.V. decided she did not want to get involved and did not file a complaint with the Department in 2014.
- L.V. disclosed the rape to two friends, S.B. and W.S.

L.V. filed a complaint with the Department in April of 2018, when she learned that the Defendant had victimized others at the Academy.

W.S. was interviewed on July 23, 2018, and confirmed that L.V. had told her about the sexual assault in 2014. W.S. had encouraged L.V. to tell the Salon Academy about what had happened. W.S. believed that L.V. had told the McPherson's about the assault.

S.B. was interviewed on August 7, 2018, and confirmed that back in 2014, L.V. had told her she wasn't happy with her massage therapist and advised her she needed to report the conduct to authorities and/or get help.

On July 12, 2018, Detective Corneliusen conducted an interview of C.B. During the interview, C.B. disclosed the following:

- C.B. knew the Defendant through her boyfriend, M.H., who worked with him at Mountain View Physical therapy (approximately 10 years prior).
- C.B. has never been to the gym on base.
- C.B. sought out the Defendant for a massage because of his sports injury massage focus. C.B. had injuries to her shoulder that she wanted worked on.
- C.B. felt comfortable with the Defendant, because he was a co-worker of her boyfriend, was an instructor at the Salon Academy, and had a massage contract and office with Malmstrom Air Force Base.
- The Defendant knew where C.B. lived due to his relationship with her boyfriend.
- The Defendant came to her home in February of 2014, picked her up, and drove her to the base.
- C.B. accurately described how one would enter the gym and the location of the Defendant's massage office and room.
- C.B. accurately described the massage room set up.

- C.B. filled out paperwork detailing her areas of concern for focus of the massage (target spots).
- C.B. had had several massages in the past, from other providers.
- C.B. entered the massage room, undressed (except her underwear) and laid down on the massage table on her stomach.
- The Defendant entered the room and completed the massage without incident.
- The Defendant then proceeded to slide C.B.'s underwear to the side and massage her vaginal area with his fingers. He told her "a lot of women carry stress there."
- C.B. was shocked.
- She told the Defendant, "I don't think we should be doing this you are [my boyfriend's friend]. I don't want to do this, stop."
- The Defendant did not stop and forced sexual intercourse on C.B.
- C.B. believed the Defendant ejaculated inside of her.
- C.B. described the weights clanking in the adjacent weight room while the Defendant was raping her.
- C.B. felt numb to what was happening to her.
- C.B. was shocked and things were fuzzy after the rape. She recalls the Defendant driving her back home without her saying anything.
- C.B. did not tell anyone about the rape at that time.
- The Defendant started texting C.B. about her boyfriend and other things.
- C.B. disclosed that she did not want her boyfriend to find out about the assault, for fear of ruining their relationship. She tried to continue like nothing had happened.
- On April 7, 2014, C.B. received a text from the Defendant.
- C.B.'s boyfriend was out of town.
- Before she could respond, he was at her door.
- Reluctantly, she let him in.
- The Defendant stated that he had come to give her a massage.
- C.B. laid down with her clothes on and the Defendant began to give her a massage for about five minutes.
- The Defendant then took C.B.'s clothes off. The Defendant had sexual intercourse with C.B., got dressed and left the residence.
- C.B. became pregnant. C.B. had sexual intercourse with her boyfriend on April 5, 2018 and the Defendant raped her on April 7, 2018. Therefore, she did not know who the father was.

- C.B. had a complicated pregnancy and contacted the Defendant in July of 2014, asking for his blood type, in the event the baby needed a blood transfusion. She believed he responded by saying "O+"
- C.B. did not tell her boyfriend about the rape during the pregnancy, for fear of him leaving.
- C.B. sought counseling with Marth Morgan, a local therapist.
- C.B. disclosed to Ms. Morgan what the Defendant had done to her.
- C.B. told her boyfriend what had happened in one of the counseling sessions with Ms. Morgan shortly after the birth of their child.

M.H., C.B.'s boyfriend, was interviewed on July 23, 2018, corroborating when and how he learned of the rape. He expressed rage at the incident and described C.B. as unusually distant during her pregnancy. A paternity test revealed he was the biological father of their child.

Ms. Morgan was interviewed on August 9, 2018 and confirmed that C.B. had been a patient of hers. She described how C.B. did not initially realize she was a sexual assault victim. She described her as being susceptible of being taken advantage of and described her sense of betrayal following the rapes. She confirmed that C.B. told her boyfriend during a session following the birth of their child. She described how after Great Falls Tribune Article in April of 2018, C.B. came to her office without an appointment. She was shaking and showed Ms. Morgan the article and asked, "Do you think [M.H.] will believe me now?"

C.B. then went to the Great Falls Police Department to report the rape, on April 11, 2018.

On July 18, 2018, James Muscle, gym manager of the Malmstrom Airforce Base gym gave Detective Corneliusen a tour of the gym and the area where the Defendant had his office and massage room. It was consistent with how both L.V.

and C.B. described, though the rooms had been painted since 2014. Mr. Muscle informed the detective that he had caught the Defendant bringing people in without logging them in, which resulted in the gym not getting their portion of the fees. This had occurred on more than one occasion.

Records revealed that the Defendant was on base when L.V. had been raped. It should be noted that neither L.V. or C.B. were shown as being logged in on the payment sheet, thus corroborating the Defendant's instruction to have L.V. sneak past the check-in.

Detective Corneliusen received the Department of Labor's administrative investigation into the Defendant on August 1, 2108. In addition to L.V., several other females at the Salon Academy had been subjected to sexual assaults by the Defendant. The investigation revealed that the Defendant had used his position of power as an instructor at the Academy to coerce students into inappropriate sexual situations. In addition to physical touch, the Defendant would make sexual statements to several female students. This caused them fear of being alone with the Defendant. The Defendant would cause his students to massage him and then expose himself. These allegations occurred during the same time frame as the rapes of L.V. and C.B. The other 12 victims have been identified as:

- C.G.
- J.B.
- R.N.
- M.E.
- N.K.
- B.M.
- A.C.
- A.H.

- A.O.
- L.H.
- J.C.
- A.H. 2

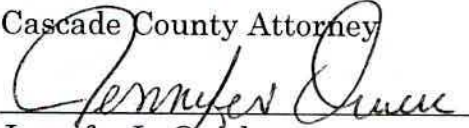
Given the foregoing, the undersigned has probable cause to believe that the Defendant has engaged in activity constituting the offenses of:

COUNT I: SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITHOUT CONSENT, a Felony, in violation of M.C.A. § 45-5-503.

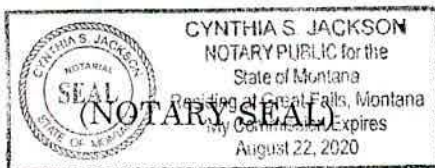
COUNT II: SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITHOUT CONSENT, a Felony, in violation of M.C.A. § 45-5-503.

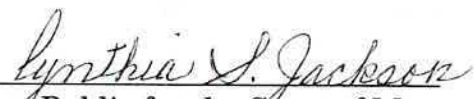
DATED 4 December 2018.

JOSHUA A. RACKI  
Cascade County Attorney

  
Jennifer L. Quick  
Deputy County Attorney

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me on the 4th day of December, 2018.



  
Notary Public for the State of Montana,  
Residing at Great Falls, Cascade County,  
Montana.

My commission expires August 22, 2020

**ORDER**

Upon examining the foregoing Motion and Affidavit for Leave to File Information, and it appearing that there is probable cause to charge the above-named defendant as stated in the Information,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the State of Montana is granted leave to file the Information as requested by the State's motion.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED A WARRANT SHALL ISSUE FOR THE DEFENDANT'S ARREST.

DATED this 5 day of December, 2018, at Great Falls, Montana.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DISTRICT COURT JUDGE

cc: County Attorney/Jennifer L. Quick  
Defense Counsel c/o Public Defender's Office/  
Defendant - c/o Counsel  
GFPD/  
CCSO/warrants