



250 South Jefferson Street * PO Box 130
Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Ph: (507) 637-4010 * Fax: (507) 637-4012

Office of the County Attorney

Jenna M. Peterson
Redwood County Attorney

Amy M. Busse
Thomas Borgen
Shannon Ness
Assistant County Attorneys

PRESS RELEASE

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JURY FINDS HANSKA MAN GUILTY OF POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

A Redwood County District Court jury found Dustin Michael Thompson, 37, of Hanska, guilty of the Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Fifth Degree, County Attorney Jenna Peterson announced Tuesday.

The jury deliberated for approximately 18 minutes on October 11, 2023, before delivering the guilty verdict around 3:28 p.m.

According to the criminal complaint, evidence, and testimony at trial, on January 4, 2022, Thompson was transported by law enforcement in the back seat of a squad car from Jackpot Junction Casino to Brown County. On January 9, 2022, while cleaning out the squad car, officers located a black magnetic box in the back seat, passenger side between the door and the cage partition. Inside the black magnetic box was a small bag containing a crystal like substance consistent with methamphetamine, a small bag containing 13 20 MG Sildenafil Citrate pills, two Verizon sim cards, a 32 gigabit micro SD card, and a receipt from Walmart in New Ulm, MN.

Officers reviewed squad video from January 4, 2022, and observed Thompson take a black box from inside his pants and stick it in the same area of the squad car where it was later located by officers. Officers confirmed Thompson was the last person in the back seat of that squad car on January 4, 2022. Officers also reviewed New Ulm Walmart video surveillance which showed Thompson purchasing Verizon sim cards with cash on December 23, 2021 which was consistent with the Walmart receipt located in the black magnetic box. A later forensic analysis completed by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension confirmed the crystal like substance located was 2.896 grams of methamphetamine.

Assistant County Attorney Shannon Ness, who prosecuted the case, told the jury in her closing argument, "The simple fact is Defendant possessed meth in the backseat of a squad car and stashed it there because he knew once he got to jail, it would be located on his person. Meth is illegal in Minnesota. Defendant was well aware of that."

Thompson will be sentenced on November 27, 2023, at the Redwood County Courthouse.