

LOCAL

Court records say former Canton fire chief promised beer for a vote

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The former Canton fire chief is the latest official to be arrested in a voter fraud sweep in Madison County.

Madison County Assistant District Attorney Bryan Buckley confirmed Cary Johnson was arrested Friday as the seventh person accused of voter fraud.

The arrest stems from the 2017 Canton municipal elections.

Johnson allegedly bought votes in exchange for money and beer. He was indicted on three counts of voter fraud, Buckley said.

Canton Alderwoman and former Police Chief Vickie McNeil and five others were indicted Thursday on charges of voter fraud. Also indicted were Courtney Rainey, a Canton Public School Board member; Donell Robinson, 52; Jennifer Robinson, 45; Desmond King, 44, a deputy clerk for Canton; and Sherman Matlock, 44.

Buckley said an investigation began following the 2017 Canton city elections after complaints were received from citizens.

He hinted Friday that more indictments could be coming.

"That's it for this round. There is a round two coming. We anticipate more cases brought before the grand jury," he said.

Canton also had a voter fraud case in the city's previous municipal election.

In 2014, Cobby Williams, a candidate for Canton alderman in 2013, was given a five-year suspended sentence for submitting a false voter registration application on behalf of a felon.

Madison County District Attorney Michael Guest said then that Williams knowingly submitted the voter registration on behalf of the woman although she had told him she was

ineligible to vote because of a felony conviction.

In Mississippi, individuals convicted of certain felonies are prohibited from voting. Some of the crimes include embezzlement, forgery, bribery, burglary, theft, arson, perjury, bigamy and false pretense.

This is a developing story.