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Buffalo property company where she worked.

Jun. 16, 2013

Already previously convicted for drunken driving, Mary Jane Hagler of Hamburg, New York, added a new crime to her record.

The bookkeeper on Friday admitted stealing nearly \$800,000 over 10 years from the Buffalo property company where she worked.

The stolen money helped support her casino gambling habit, a prosecutor said.

Hagler, 58, of Rosedale Avenue, pleaded guilty to third-degree grand larceny and first-degree offering a false instrument for filing before Erie County Judge Thomas P. Franczyk.

Hagler admitted stealing \$796,989 from Pearce and Pearce Co., a property management firm on Niagara Falls Boulevard.

She stole the money mostly by writing unauthorized checks payable to herself.

She also charged personal purchases to the company credit card.

The thefts happened from January 2003 to December 2012.

When the company's owner announced plans for an audit of the firm's financial record, Hagler quickly confessed to stealing \$100,000, said John C. Doscher, head of the Erie County District Attorney's Special Investigations Bureau, who prosecutes embezzlers and others accused of financial crimes.

The full amount stolen in the embezzlement was determined through an investigation.

Doscher said it is unusual for an embezzlement to continue for so many years.

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Her husband used \$300,000 from his retirement plan and \$100,000 from their home to pay back the company.

Hagler also admitted evading state income tax by failing to report her ill-gotten earnings on her state income tax returns.

Even with partial restitution of the amount she embezzled, Hagler faces a minimum of two to four years in prison because of her prior felony convictions — a DWI and aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in 2004 and an aggravated DWI and unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in 2006.

The maximum sentence she faces is 5 1/2 to 11 years. Her sentencing is scheduled for Sept. 19.

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