

PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET: MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street Suite A, Springfield, IL, on February 26, 2015, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following inmates:

C71688	RODNEY GROSS
C63418	MELVIN THEGPEN
C87793	OSCAR LEE JONES
L02079	DONALD GRANT
C82838	LEE JONES
C01838	ANGEL SOTO
C64310	LARRY FULTON

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Findley
Roll call was taken by the Recording Secretary: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos

MEMBER	PRESENT	ABSENT
Ed Bowers	X	
Edith Crigler	X	
Salvador Diaz	X	
Gary Duncan	X	
Donald Wayne Dunn	X	
Craig Findley	X	
Pete Fisher	X	
Eric Gregg	X	
Vonetta Harris	X	
Tom Johnson	X	
Daryl Jones	X	
Adam Monreal	X	
William Norton	X	
Aurthur Mae Perkins		X
Donald Shelton	X	

14 Members Present

The Recording Secretary presented the following minutes for approval:
Open Session Minutes from April 2015. (CF-ADM) Leave

Meeting was adjourned (CF-WN). Leave.
Submitted by: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET- OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: **Rodney Gross** IDOC Number & Institution: **C71688**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Inmate Rodney Gross, IDOC# C71688 .

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, D. Shelton
Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Member Diaz presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Mr. Diaz interviewed Inmate Larry Fulton at the Stateville Correctional Center on April 15, 2015. He shared that Inmate Fulton is currently incarcerated for Murder, serving a sentence of 100-300 years, along with a sentence of Armed Robbery, 10-40 years, and one other sentence for Aggravated Battery, for which he is to serve 25-100 years. These sentences are to run concurrently.

Mr. Diaz shared that discussed and considered for parole were Mr. Fulton's version of the facts related to the subject offense, institutional adjustment, accomplishments, and health status, parole plans, and issues of accountability and remorse.

Mr. Diaz stated that after receiving information from an acquaintance who worked at a downtown Chicago print press (Donald Howard) relative to the pay check cashing routine of several employees of the printing company, Larry Fulton at gun point accosted the employee with the cash, and grabbed the bag containing \$5,500. During this robbery, Fulton shot the employee (Bernard DiMeo) in the forearm and also shot DiMeo's friend and former co-worker who accompanied him to the bank (Thomas Dolce) two times resulting in his demise.

Mr. Diaz shared that Fulton has been incarcerated for 40 years and this is his 23rd time before the PRB. He is currently assigned "B" grade, Medium Escape Risk. Fulton has completed his GED and several certificate programs (Welding, Automotive, Barber), he has converted to Islam, and With regards to employment within the facility, Inmate Fulton is currently unassigned.

Mr. Fulton, at the time of this meeting, was currently grieving a ticket related to the use of his Muslim name (providing false information) and a second ticket for Unauthorized Property/Contraband. For the past twelve years the majority of infractions have been for Disobeying Direct Orders (resulting in periods of one month Seg. time). The last major ticket was in 2010 for refusing to take an X-Ray.

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Mr. Fulton plans to live with his elderly mother and to work in the field of community rehabilitation. His friend (Arnold Wilson is the CEO of a community based organization designed to assist the D.O.C. re-entry community) is also planning to help him during his transition into society.

Mr. Diaz noted that Mr. Fulton continues to maintain his innocence, claiming he was out of town at the time of the offense. He alleges that a particular police detective used his case to self-promote that he cooperated with the police.

Mr. Diaz noted that the big problem with Mr. Fulton's assertions is that victim DiMeo among others identified him as the shooter.

Mr. Diaz recognizes that At this point it appears that Mr. Fulton has made strides. He presents calm and insightful except when discussing his accountability. He however continues to receive tickets, though appearing minor in nature they are nonetheless indicative of a failure to adjust as required.

Motion to deny parole. Motion carries 13-0. Voting for the motion were Mr. Bowers, Mrs. Crigler, Mr. Diaz, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fishe, Mr. Gregg, Mrs. Harris, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Monreal, Mr. Norton, Mr. Shelton, and Chariman Findley.

“The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm.”

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET- OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: **Donald Grant** IDOC Number & Institution: **L02079**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Inmate Donald Grant, IDOC #C02079 .

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, D. Shelton
Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Member Monreal presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Mr. Monreal interviewed Inmate Donald Grant on April 2015, after being continued at the Inmate's request from his original hearing on October 2015.

Inmate Grant is under IDOC custody for the crime of murder. In May 1976, the inmate and a co-defendant went to a store, where they had an altercation with a security officer. The following day, the inmate went back and killed the security officer by shooting him with a firearm. His projected release date is 2064.

Inmate Grant admits all responsibility. During the interview, Mr. Monreal said, he showed he was sorry for his actions. Mr. Monreal noted that his instant explanation for the crime was that he had been drinking a lot. Mr. Grant is a Vietnam Veteran.

His institutional adjustment is remarkable. Correctional officers describe him as a responsible and hardworking individual. He has also taken college courses and participates in a lot of programming. He has only had two minor tickets. He has good relations with staff.

Mr. Grant's plans are to transition into society through St. Leonard's House.

Although Mr. Monreal notes Mr. Grant's excellent institutional adjustment and remorse for the crime, he believes this was a senseless and unnecessary act of violence. To parole him at this time would promote disrespect for the law.

Motion to deny parole (Monreal-Shelton). Motion carries 14-0.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm."

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET OPEN SESSION—MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: **OSCAR LEE JONES** IDOC Number/Institution: **C87793/DIXON CC**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open en banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, 2015, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Oscar Lee Jones, IDOC C87793.

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D.W. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, and D. Shelton.

Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Member Johnson presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Mr. Johnson shared with members of the Illinois Prisoner Review Board that he met with inmate Oscar Lee Jones, C87793, at the Dixon Correctional Center on April 14, 2015 for a parole consideration hearing. Also present at the time of the interview was Board Member Jones.

At the interview, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Oscar Lee Jones talked about the facts of the case, his statement of the events, the nature of the offense, Mr. Jones' institutional adjustment, and his parole plans if the board deems it appropriate to release him.

Mr. Johnson stated that Mr. Jones is currently 55 years of age and in fairly good health. He is currently serving an aggregated sentence of 120-360 years for two counts of robbery, two counts of rape and two counts of burglary.

Mr. Johnson continued to share that both offenses took place when Mr. Jones was 17 years of age and both offenses were committed against elderly women, both in their eighties. At approximately the same time period Mr. Jones was charged with a similar offense of an elderly woman and would have been prosecuted for it except for the convictions of the subsequent two at which time the States Attorney dismissed the third.

Mr. Johnson noted that Mr. Jones' institutional record has been good in the past years having received only several tickets since 2011 and none since his hearing in 2014.

He has received certificates in anger management, computer technology and has completed his GED and has received significant college credits. He maintains contact with his family members

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though rarely has received any visits from them. Mr. Jones also remains active in Bible studies. He works and acknowledges great remorse for what he did as a young person.

Mr. Johnson also shared that if he were paroled, he would like to parole to a halfway house in Milwaukee and ultimately live with his sister in Wisconsin. Mr. Johnson also noted that Inmate Jones has not completed any sexual counseling program while incarcerated.

Although members Johnson and Duncan stated that his institutional adjustment seems stellar, it is of great concern to them that he has not completed a sexual counseling program due to the nature of Mr. Jones' offense. Several other members acquiesced.

Members Harris and Crigler expressed praise for the institutional adjustment of Mr. Jones. They shared with the Board that they believe him at good risk for parole, yet would look favorably on the completion of a sexual counseling program in addition to his reintegration to society with the help of the halfway house in Milwaukee.

Mr. Johnson ultimately shared with the Board that he cannot recommend Mr. Jones for parole at this time. He believes that to release him would deprecate the seriousness of the offense and promote disrespect for the law.

Motion to Deny Parole (TJ-EB). Motion carries 9-5. Members dissenting were Mr. Diaz, Mrs. Harris, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Shelton.

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET- OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: **Angel Soto** IDOC Number & Institution: **C01838**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Inmate Angel Soto, C01838.

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, D. Shelton
Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Member Shelton presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Angel Soto was heard for parole consideration at Jacksonville Correctional Center on May 19, 2015. Factors discussed during his interview were his testimony, including an account of his childhood in Puerto Rico; the facts of his conviction; his criminal history; his institutional adjustment; and the parole plan.

Mr. Shelton shares that on July 24, 1972 at 11:45pm Angel Louis Soto and a co-offender entered a liquor store and bar on N. Milwaukee Avenue in Chicago, with the intent to rob the business. Both offenders were masked with nylon stockings and both were armed with guns when they entered and announced the stick-up. The only other persons in the store were the owner, Walter Schnoor; and a customer, Thaddeus Zurkowski.

After his co-offender obtained the cash drawer, Mr. Soto pulled back the slide of the blue steel semi-automatic pistol he was brandishing, which ejected a live round. He then turned and twice fired his weapon at the victims, striking the store-owner in the stomach and striking the customer in the back. Circumstances suggest that Mr. Zurkowski never even turned to look at the offenders before being shot. Mr. Zurkowski died the following day, leaving a wife and children. Mr. Schnoor survived, but only after three major surgeries.

Inmate Soto was arrested two days after the robbery, one day after Mr. Zurkowski's death, after firing shots at two girls who were walking home from a restaurant. The girls, who fled from him into an apartment building, were able to identify Mr. Soto, who was nearby, at the arrival of police. At the time of his arrest Mr. Soto had in his possession a .32 caliber blue steel semi-automatic that was later determined to be the weapon that fired the bullets recovered from the bodies of Mr. Zurkowski and Mr. Schnoor.

Mr. Shelton shares that Inmate Soto has not produced a parole plan although he believes a relative could provide housing. This has not been established. Inmate Soto's record indicates

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eight previous arrests, six of them being felonies, and a previous incarceration with the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Mr. Shelton does note that his institutional record is quite acceptable overall, however, his prior criminal record combined with the circumstances of this murder, and his lack of an adequate parole plan continue to be of concern..

The Board finds that release at this time would not serve the interests of the public and would deprecate the seriousness of the crimes.

Motion to Deny Parole (Shelton-Dunn). Motion carries 14-0.

Motion for a 3 year set. (Fisher-Monreal). Motion does not carry 4-10. Members voting against the motion were Mr. Bowers, Mrs. Crigler, Mr. Diaz, Mr. Duncan, Mrs. Harris, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Shelton, and Chairman Findley.

“The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm.”

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET- OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: **Melvin Thegpen** IDOC Number & Institution: **C63418**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Inmate Melvin Thegpen, C63418 .

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, D. Shelton
Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Member Crigler presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Member Edith L. Crigler attempted to interview inmate Thegpen for parole consideration. However he stated he was speaking with the judge and could not talk to her. She shared that Inmate Thegpen was distant and could not be engage in conversation.

Mrs. Crigler shared that Inmate Thegpen is serving 50-150 years for aggravated kidnapping, rape and attempted murder. Facts indicate that he attacked the victim as she was leaving high school. He forced her into his car and drove to a rural area where he raped her. He then drove a short distance and forced her out of the car and into a ditch. He then fired four shots, hitting her twice.

Inmate Thegpen's mental condition does not allow him to maintain a job assignment. He has no parole plans.

After review of all factors available to the Board and considering inmate Thegpen's lack of cooperation to be interviewed, the Board decided to deny parole in that to do so would deprecate the seriousness of the offense and promote disrespect for the law.

Motion to deny parole. (Crigler-Gregg). Motion carries 14-0.

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET- OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: **Rodney Gross** IDOC Number & Institution: **C71688**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Inmate Rodney Gross, IDOC# C71688.

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, D. Shelton
Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Chairman Findley presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Chairman Findley stated that Rodney Gross, sentenced to a term of 75-100 years for rape and murder in 1976, was interviewed for parole consideration on February 24th, 2015 at the Danville Correctional Center.

He entered DOC custody in 1977 and has never received a vote in favor of parole. It is estimated by DOC that he will have completed sufficient incarceration to be eligible for release in 2018. His post release plan is to reside in an East St. Louis facility that accepts sex offenders as residents.

Mr. Gross' file also includes an extensive history of juvenile placement and of psychiatric evaluations. Reference to a troubled childhood and family dysfunction appear frequently. To this interviewer, Mr. Gross seems to have been an unbounded child. As a psychiatrist wrote of the 18-year old Mr. Gross, "He might as well go on and we will all just keep our fingers crossed."

Chairman Findley states, "As with so many offenders, Mr. Gross may have never had a chance for success".

The Chairman continued to share that the instant offense occurred on August 28, 1976, in Rock Island County, when Gross, just a month past his 19th birthday entered the home of Della Masengarb. The victim's husband was away and her two young children were home. Petitioner says he was invited to the home and that he had a past intimate relationship with her that had continued into the time of her marriage. He claims to have been under the influence of alcohol and cocaine. They engaged in sex. He says by consent, but the conviction was for rape. They argued--about what he can't remember, and he stabbed her multiple times.

Gross maintains that the children were asleep, but letters of protest state that one child was witness to the crime. Absent details from a trial transcript or appellate opinion it is not possible

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to know exactly what happened that night. But as Mr. Gross said at the end of his interview: “I knew her. I killed her.”

Mr. Gross is nearly 58 years old and has been incarcerated for 38 years. He suffers from COPD and a hernia and received medical treatment.

The Chairman shared that Inmate Gross has taken excellent advantage of educational opportunities, earning a GED, and by his estimate 100-150 college credits. DOC reports he has taken classes at Carl Sandburg, Lakeland and Danville, completing courses in carpentry, masonry, plumbing and wiring. He has completed Sex Offender counseling and is currently enrolled in college and has recently completed courses in algebra and statistics. He names a friend, Don Garrett, who will find him an apartment and believes he will find work in construction or small engine repair.

He appears sincerely remorseful and expresses regret for the harm he has done to others. He told Chairman Findley, “I don’t like what I was, but I can be useful and productive if I get a chance.”

His institutional adjustment is non-violent, although IDRs indicate a past preference for prohibited substances, namely alcohol and tobacco.

Mr. Diaz stated that Mr. Gross’ possibility of parole would greatly improve with a strong parole plan. Chairman Findley agreed.

Motion to deny parole. Motion carries 14-0.

“The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm.”

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET- OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 28, 2015

Inmate Name: Lee Jones IDOC Number & Institution: **C82838**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open En Banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on May 28, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Inmate .

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D. Dunn, P. Fisher, E. Gregg, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, A. Monreal, W. Norton, D. Shelton
Other(s) present: Gabriela Chavez Barrientos, Recording Secretary

Summary of discussion for parole consideration: Member Diaz presented a summary of the parole interview and a review of all file materials.

Member Diaz stated that he interviewed inmate Lee Jones at the Dixon Correctional center on **DATE HERE**. Inmate Jones is currently under IDOC custody for the offenses of Attempt Murder and Aggravated Battery. He was sentenced to 50-100 years in prison and his projected release date is 2036.

Member Diaz shared with the Board that on November 14, 1977, Inmate Jones sideswiped Officer Eddie Lee Jackson's police car. This was an unmarked car and also had several civilian occupants. Inmate Jones and Officer Jackson had an altercation and Jones ultimately shot Officer Jackson in the head. Inmate Jones fled the scene, but was captured after twenty minutes.

The attack caused Officer Jackson brain damage and the loss of his speech and vision. A bullet was recovered from Officer Jackson's vehicle and this later matched a 237 Python Pistol that was found in Inmate Jones' vehicle.

Member Diaz proceeded to tell the Board about Inmate Jones' institutional adjustment. His record is acceptable. His last IDR was in 2011, for Unauthorized Movement and Disobeying a Direct Order. He also has a long and extensive prior criminal history. Officer Jones was arrested 23 times before being admitted to IDOC. Several members of the Board expressed their

Diaz shared that he has an acceptable parole plan. He would like to reside in St. Leonard's House in Chicago if paroled. Inmate Jones states that he divorced with two adult children.

Member Diaz noted that although he has an acceptable parole plan, it is impossible for him to recommend Inmate Jones for parole at this time. This was a despicable murder and to grant parole would deprecate the seriousness of the offense and promote disrespect for the law.

Motion to deny parole (Diaz- Johnson). Motion carries 12-2. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Bowers, Mr. Diaz, Mr. Duncan, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Gregg, Mrs. Harris, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Monreak, Mr. Norton, and Mr. Shelton.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm."