



STATE OF ILLINOIS
 JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR
PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

Donald Shelton, Chair

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET
OPEN SESSION— December 14, 2023

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on December 14, 2023, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following individuals in custody:

C81919	Henderson, Michael
C90056	Robinson, Virgil
C70122	Gorham, Robert
B40241	Collins, Charles
N03938	Hamilton, Darryl

The meeting was called to order by Donald Shelton, Chair.
 Roll call was taken by Recording Secretary Alexandria Bryan.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mr. Jared Bohland	X	
Mr. Matthew Coates	X	
Mr. William Delgado	X	
Ms. Julie Globokar	X	
Ms. Darryldean Goff	X	
Mr. Jeffrey Grubbs	X	
Mr. Rodger Heaton	X	
Ms. LeAnn Miller	X	
Mr. Donald Shelton, Chair	X	
Ms. Robin Shoffner	X	
Ms. Carmen Terrones	X	
Ms. Krystal Tison	X	
Mr. Kenneth Tupy	X	

13 Members Present 0 Members Absent

The Board heard the case of Michael Henderson C81919, Virgil Robinson C90056, Robert Gorham C70122, Charles Collins B40241, and Darryl Hamilton N03938 as detailed in the individual case minutes.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL for 11/30/2023: R. HEATON – L. MILLER

Open Session: W. DELGADO – L. MILLER Open Closed Session: J. GRUBBS – W. DELGADO
 Close Closed Session: J. GRUBBS – W. DELGADO

Meeting was adjourned by (J. BOHLAND-K. TUPY) Leave



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION December 14, 2023

Individual in custody's Name: Charles Collins IDOC Number: B40241

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on December 14, 2023, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Charles Collins, B40241.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Miller, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Shelton, Chairman.

Recording Secretary: Alexandria Bryan.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Mr. Charles Collins appeared for his parole interview on November 8, 2023. He was interviewed by Board Member, Ms. LeAnn Miller via Web Ex video conference. The following persons were also in attendance of the interview: Ms. Mira DeJong, Mr. Charles Collins' attorney; Mr. Charles Dunn, his father; Ms. Natoma Doss, his friend for over 18 years. Mr. Charles Collins was engaged, articulate, positive and very respectful. He is 49 years old.

Mr. Charles Collins was convicted from a jury trial of Manufacturing and Delivery of 400<900 Grams Cocaine and was sentenced to Life. He has been in custody since 2013. Mr. Charles Collins was charged as a Habitual Criminal on this charge and is the only person in the State of Illinois serving a life sentence for a drug offense.

On February 13, 2023, Governor Pritzker commuted his sentence from Natural Life without Parole to Life with the Possibility of Parole. State's Attorney, Ms. Kim Foxx did not oppose his clemency hearing.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On August 31, 2010, Mr. Charles Collins was driving his girlfriend's car when he was pulled over by police. After asking for his license and insurance, the officer learned the Mr. Charles Collins was on Mandatory Supervised Release, which gave the officer the necessary justification to search the vehicle. In the trunk, the police officer found 809.8 grams of cocaine. Mr. Charles Collins was tried by a jury. He was found guilty of Manufacturing and Delivery of 400<900 Grams and sentenced to life in prison as a Habitual Offender.



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At the sentencing hearing, Judge Carol Kipperman expressed discomfort for a natural life sentence on a drug case where Mr. Charles Collins used no force, threat of violence and did not have a weapon.

Mr. Charles Collins appealed and won his appeal on September 28, 2015. He was resentenced on September 28, 2023 and was sentenced to a Class 1 with 30 years at 50 percent. His Mandatory Supervised Release date will be July 12, 2025.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

In 1992, he was charged with Possession of Controlled Substance Manufacturing and Delivery. He received five years' probation. Mr. Collins was hanging out with his cousin and a group of other people when police entered the building. Others in the group began to empty their pockets and put drugs on the ground to avoid having the drugs on their person. The police charged multiple persons in the building with possession. Mr. Collins pled guilty and was sentenced to five years' probation.

In 1992, he was charged with Robbery and received three years. When Mr. Collins was 17 years old, he was drinking with friends in the park. Mr. Collins blacked out and woke up handcuffed to a bench in the police station. He was charged with robbery alongside his friends. Mr. Collins pled guilty to the offense and was sentenced to probation.

In 1999, he was charged with 3 counts of Manufacturing and Delivery 15+ grams of Cocaine. He received 12 years. Mr. Collins was incarcerated from April 1999 to August 2004. During this period of his life, he was struggling to make ends meet and juggle his dependence on alcohol. Mr. Collins sold drugs to someone that he had been introduced to. This person was an undercover police officer. Mr. Collins accepted responsibility for his actions and pled guilty to this offense.

In 2007, he was charge with Manufacturing and Delivery 15<100 grams of Cocaine, Felon Possession Weapon. He received 6 years. Mr. Charles Collins was incarcerated from November 2007 to April 2010. Mr. Charles Collins was pulled over and the officer asked to search the car after they checked his license and insurance. The officer found a container with drugs inside. Mr. Charles Collins was charged with possession of cocaine. He pled guilty to this offense.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Collins has had 18 disciplinary reports during his 10 years of incarceration. Out of the 18, there have been 5 major tickets. He has not had a disciplinary report since 2014. His disciplinary ticket on February 18, 2014 for dangerous contraband was for a sharpened piece of metal. Mr. Charles Collins stated that he and his cellmate were asleep and at 2:45am, they were awakened for a shake down. He stated that officers said, "pack your stuff, you are going to seg." Mr. Collins stated that he never had this item and that he asked to take a lie detector test but was refused. He stated he was found guilty and that he sent in many grievances on this matter and was never given a response to any of the grievances he filed.



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He currently lives on an incentive-based housing wing and works 6 days a week as a laundry porter. He has been sober for over a decade and intends to maintain lifelong sobriety.

He has had 1 visit in 2023 and it was from his friend, Ms. Natoma Doss.

Mr. Collins works at staying healthy by running, playing basketball, and lifting weights.

Mr. Collins earned his GED in East Moline Correctional Center. He earned his Associate Degree in Applied Science. He has completed Anger Management, Dealing with Conflict, Cognitive Behavior Therapy. He recently completed his Facilitator's Training on these and is now a certified trainer for all of these programs. That completion was on November 16, 2023. He belongs to the Church of Christ.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Collins stated that he did have the drugs in the trunk of the car. He has never denied that he wasn't responsible for the drugs. He takes full responsibility for the crime.

Mr. Collins stated that he was struggling to make ends meet while financially supporting himself, his younger siblings, his 3 children, 5 stepchildren and additional family and friends.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Collins plans to live with his cousin, Mr. George Caruthers. He has a strong support network that includes cousins, father and long-time friend, Ms. Natoma Doss. Mr. Collins worked for many years as a CDL truck driver and wishes to renew his license and begin driving a truck again. He has a job lined up with Brady Trucking, Inc. He can also work for his cousin's trucking business.

Ms. Trenesha Boyd of Precious Ministry Reconciliation will provide re-entry support, including assistance with renewing his CDL license and applying for public benefits. Illinois Prison Project will also provide additional reentry support.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

There is no opposition to Mr. Charles Collins parole.

ENBANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Charles Collins first time at an En Banc hearing.

MR. CHARLES COLLINS STATEMENT TO THE BOARD

Mr. Charles Collins feels very remorseful for how his decisions have negatively impacted his



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loved ones, especially his children and for the destruction he caused his community by selling drugs.

He stated that he is a changed man and has worked hard for 13 years to rehabilitate himself. He stated that he will be staying clear of any criminal behaviors. He stated that his days of selling drugs are over, and that he has a great deal of support. Mr. Collins stated that Governor Pritzker gave me a chance and I hope the Board will give me that chance.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Mira De Jong, Mr. Collins' attorney, stated that Mr. Collins takes full responsibility and is remorseful. At the beginning of the year, he was the only inmate serving a life sentence for a drug charge. She stated that she wanted to make one small correction to the institutional record, Mr. Collins only received 1 ticket in 2014 while serving this sentence. Mr. Collins has had no tickets in nearly a decade. She stated that this was a nonviolent offense in spite of that he has acknowledged that he has caused real harm. She stated that his mother struggled with addiction, and he realizes that he became that person that supplied someone else's family member drugs. He plans on attending AA meetings. He has a certified drug counselor set up for him when he paroles. He has realistic expectations of paroling. He has spent 13 years in prison.

Mr. Charles Dunn, Mr. Charles Collins' father, stated that Mr. Collins made bad decisions leading him to prison. He has had 13 years to see those bad decisions. He stated that he thinks that he can use what he has learned to be a productive citizen.

Mr. Bohland questioned the risk assessment. He stated that he was deemed high risk.

Ms. Miller stated that he has a new risk assessment completed last week and he is moderate risk.

Mr. Bohland stated that in September 2023 he was resentenced to 30 years. He stated that his sentence went from Life to 30 years with 15 years being served. He also stated that this was his fourth conviction of drug trafficking. He stated that 15 years is an appropriate sentence.

Ms. Mira De Jong stated that he has been resentenced, but he was commuted to parole by Governor Pritzker first. She stated that there is no benefit to society to keep him in prison.

Ms. Tison questioned Mr. Charles Dunn about the recent contact with Mr. Collins, and what communication has happened.

Ms. Charles Dunn stated that he talks to Mr. Collins on or about 4-5 times per month via telephone.

Mr. Tupy questioned if Mr. Collins has been working the entire time, he has been in Illinois Department of Corrections.



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Ms. Mira De Jong stated that he has been working as long as they have allowed him, but they did not allow him in the beginning of his sentence.

Mr. Delgado questioned how many children Mr. Charles Dunn has.

Mr. Charles Dunn stated that he has 3 children.

Mr. Delgado stated that Mr. Collins' poverty issues with his family during the time of his offense lead him to make money in a way that was not appropriate. He has served time for all four of his offenses during this sentence. He stated that he understands the impact of drugs within our community. He also stated that Mr. Collins was working as a truck driver previous to incarceration.

Ms. Mira De Jong stated that Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation has agreed to help Mr. Collins with his transition back into society.

Board Members discussed Mr. Collins' discharge date. Mr. Collins updated discharge date is July 13, 2025.

Ms. Globokar stated that considering someone who is going to be paroling so soon she questions if early release would deprecate the seriousness of the crime. She also questioned how Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation will be able to help Mr. Collins with his transition back into society.

Ms. Mira De Jong stated that Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation has a counselor, Ms. Boyd set up for Mr. Collins. Ms. Boyd will have a meeting with him about his goals and helping him make plans to achieve his goals. She also stated that he has years of experience driving trucks with his CDL. Reentry plan he has multiple people holding him accountable as well as his cousins and father assisting him with transportation.

The Board Members discussed how long Mr. Collins has been in continuous custody. It was stated that Mr. Collins date of incident was August 31, 2010. He was sentenced on January 15, 2013. Mr. Collins has been in continuous custody since 2010 between the County Jail and Illinois Department of Corrections.

Ms. Miller stated that Mr. Collins has served 13 years on a non-violent drug offense. He was given a Life sentence due to being prosecuted as a Habitual Offender. Mr. Collins believed that he was going to be in prison for life and yet he worked hard to rehabilitate himself. He took advantage of all types of programs that would help him change into the person he is today. She stated that he has taken the necessary steps to become a "Facilitator Trainer" for Anger Management, Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Dealing with Conflict.

End of discussion.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (L. MILLER-R. SHOFFNER). Motion prevails by a unanimous vote.

After a complete review of Mr. Charles Collins case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to grant parole to Mr. Charles Collins, subject to conditions of parole release as set by the Board and by law. The Board hereby finds that Mr. Charles Collins is an appropriate candidate for parole release.

“The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged.”



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION December 14, 2023

Individual in custody's Name: Darryl Hamilton IDOC Number: N03938

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on December 14, 2023, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Darryl Hamilton, N03938.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Ms. Miller, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Shelton, Chairman.

Recording Secretary: Alexandria Bryan.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Mr. Darryl Hamilton appeared for his parole interview on Thursday November 9, 2023 via Web Ex video conference from Western Correctional Center. He was interviewed by Board Member, Mr. Kenneth Tupy. The following persons were also in attendance of the interview: Mr. James Mutchnik and Ms. Donna Peel, Mr. Darryl Hamilton's attorneys with Kirkland & Ellis Law Office, and Ms. Rebecca Galberg, their Administrative Assistant. As well as Mr. Carl Hamilton, his brother, and Ms. Marilyn Massey, his sister.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The facts of the case are that on June 28, 1999, Mr. Darryl Hamilton, and Mr. Jeff Robsen, both Vice-Lords Street Gang were going to kidnap Mr. James Williams, a Black Gangster Disciples, while other Vice-Lords were going to rob his house. Mr. Darryl Hamilton & Mr. Jeff Robsen went to Mr. James William's apartment and asked Mr. James Williams to come outside where they kidnapped him. Mr. James Williams and the woman who was with him, Ms. Monique Griffith, where then forced into a van and duct taped. The van was stopped after a high-speed pursuit by Calumet City Police. Mr. Darryl Hamilton was sentenced to life on June 26, 2006, under the three strikes law.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Darryl Hamilton's criminal history consists of three-Armed Robbery Class X cases in Cook County. One Home Invasion and Bringing Contraband, Cannabis, into Prison. He also has extensive history of misdemeanors, and other charges dismissed. Mr. Darryl Hamilton has 27 additional charges.



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INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Darryl Hamilton has a total of seven tickets. The last three tickets that he received were for refusing housing.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Darryl Hamilton testified that he got involved in drugs and alcohol when he was young. He stated that incarceration became his recovery. Mr. Darryl Hamilton stated that he is opposed to gangs. This is the reason why he has the housing tickets because he doesn't want to be housed with a gang member. He states that he renounced his gang affiliation in 1997. He stated that he had a lifelong journey of choices with his addiction, and he chose to begin robbing drug dealers because they had the money and the drugs. Mr. Darryl Hamilton stated that he has missed out on 30 years, but he stated that he has "fixed the problem." He said that he is willing to work hard and will not go back to prison.

STATEMENT FROM MR. DARRYL HAMILTON'S ATTORNEY

Mr. James Mutchnik, Mr. Darryl Hamilton's attorney, stated that Mr. Darryl Hamilton's son was killed by a Chicago Police Officer. He stated that the judge said that he had no choice under the Three Strike Law. Under today's law he would not be eligible because three of the Class X felonies that Mr. Darryl Hamilton pled guilty to were before his twenty-first birthday. He stated that Mr. Darryl Hamilton's adolescent brain was not developed, he was 17 years old at the time of the incident. He stated that Mr. Darryl Hamilton has a low risk of recidivism given his age of 62 years old. He has been incarcerated for 24 years, and his co-defendant received 12 years.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Carl Hamilton, Mr. Darryl Hamilton's brother testified that he was employed with the Chicago Police Department and is now working as an Illinois State Investigator. He stated that he can put Mr. Hamilton to work. He stated that he rehabs houses and has vacant lots and he can have Mr. Hamilton working on those properties. He said that he owns the house that they grew up in. It is a duplex; Mr. Hamilton can live on one side and his mother who needs assistance can live on the other.

Mr. Carl Hamilton stated that he lives in the Wood Lawn Area. He said that he has seen an evolution of Mr. Hamilton in the last 6 to 7 years and he is remorseful and has changed.

Ms. Marilyn Massey, Mr. Hamilton's sister testified that she was a registered nurse and is now retired from the Cook County Hospital. She stated that she has seen changes in Mr. Hamilton when he was young, back then he was angry but now he is calmer. She stated that she will drive him. She has also made plans to involve him in the Men's Club at her church. They are involved in school events and will help Mr. Hamilton further his goals. She stated that she will put Jesus back into his life and get him involved in a green's gardening program.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE



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Cook County Does not oppose.

EN BANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Darryl Hamilton's first time at an En Banc hearing.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. James Mutchnik, Mr. Darryl Hamilton's attorney, stated Mr. Hamilton has been his client for 18 years, he has 20-25 lawyers that work with Mr. Darryl Hamilton. He has been the longest client he has had. He stated that they work very hard to help him because he works very hard. He stated that Mr. Darryl Hamilton goes out of his way to send him articles, and that he is the best legal researcher. He stated that they worked on the wrongful death sentence with him. He worked with us to identify the issue with the sentencing. He stated that his parole plan will be to live with his mother, and his plan is to take care of his mother. Mr. Darryl Hamilton plans on attending Narcotics Anonymous meetings, and his sister will be his transportation to these meetings. He stated that Mr. Darryl Hamilton's sister will also be assisting with his transportation to counseling and getting assistance. Mr. Darryl Hamilton was a gang member, he renounced in 1999. He has received tickets in the past couple of years for refusing housing, because a known gang member was in that housing. He has taken those tickets to stay away from those gang issues.

Ms. Marilyn Massey, Mr. Darryl Hamilton's sister, stated that she plans to support her brother upon his release 100 percent. She stated that she has seen growth in him while he has been in jail. She stated that she attends Our Ladies of Africa Catholic Church and plans to have Mr. Darryl Hamilton involved in that process as much as possible. She stated that she is retired and plans on being with him 24/7 and has committed to take him wherever he needs to go. She stated that she plans to do whatever it takes to support her brother.

The Board Members discussed that 18 days after Mr. Darryl Hamilton was released from prison, the kidnapping took place.

Ms. Globokar stated that it was in the records that Mr. Hamilton was threatened during the crime and wasn't a willing participant in the crime.

Mr. Tupy stated that he did indicate that he did not want to proceed with the crime, but the gang members beat him and forced him to. The State's Attorney's information only provided facts of the case.

Mr. James Mutchnik, Mr. Hamilton's attorney, stated that his version of the offense was the same as his codefendant. He stated that he tried to stop it and did not realize the goal was to steal the drugs, and not buy them. He was secured in the back of the van by the gang members. He stated that Mr. Hamilton understands that being present at the crime was his mistake.



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Ms. Globokar stated that Mr. Hamilton has a number of assaults in his background. She questioned if someone could speak on his progression to those offenses.

Mr. James Mutchnik stated that they had to do with being gang affiliated, on drugs, and being suicidal after losing his father. He realized his pattern had to stop after only being out of prison for 18 days.

Ms. Marilyn Massey stated that she can't speak about why he did the things that he did. She stated that she can only speak upon what she has tried to assist him with as far as counseling and praying. She stated that she never gave up trying to help him. She stated that when he went back into prison for this crime, he was an angry young man, but since then he has taken responsibility for the things that he has done, and he has grown. He realizes the consequences for his actions, and he is committed to living a different life.

The Board Members discussed if Mr. Hamilton was able to participate in any programming while in Illinois Department of Corrections. Due to his life sentence, he was not allowed to participate in classes.

Mr. Tupy stated that Mr. Hamilton has no mental health issues to address. He stated that he appears very remorseful.

Mr. Delgado questioned Mr. Hamilton's 1995 home invasion charge.

Mr. Tupy stated that in 1994 he was charged with home invasion, and he received 6 years in Illinois Department of Corrections. He stated that he didn't have any money to support his drug habits.

Mr. James Mutchnik stated that there was a codefendant in that case.

Ms. Terrones stated that history reflects significant trauma of being sexually assaulted, and his father committing suicide. She questioned if Mr. Hamilton has received any assistance for that trauma or if Mr. Hamilton's Parole Plan includes counseling for this trauma.

Mr. James Mutchnik stated that Mr. Hamilton has had momentary counseling for being sexually assaulted. But has not received any counseling for his father's suicide. He stated that counseling will be provided by Precious Blood, as well as the men's program within the Church.

Ms. Donna Peel, Mr. Darryl Hamilton's attorney, stated that Mr. Hamilton has brought up that he has been handling things well within Illinois Department of Corrections.

Chairman Shelton questioned if Mr. Tupy noticed a change during the period of time Mr. Hamilton had no tickets. He stated that sometimes the issue is the institution for the individual in custody, and when they are transferred sometimes the issue resolves itself.

Mr. Tupy stated that Mr. Hamilton was transferred to Western Correctional Center and believes



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that helped. He also stated that Cook County did not oppose the Clemency.

End of discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (KTUPY-DGOFF). Motion prevails by a 9-3 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion are Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, and Mr. Tupy. Members that dissented were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Miller, and Chairman Shelton. Mr. Heaton was recused from this vote.

After a complete review of Mr. Darryl Hamilton's case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to grant parole to Mr. Darryl Hamilton, subject to conditions of parole release as set by the Board and by law. The Board hereby finds that Mr. Darryl Hamilton is an appropriate candidate for parole release.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION December 14, 2023

Individual in custody's Name: Michael Henderson IDOC Number: C81919

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on December 14, 2023, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Michael Henderson, C81919.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Miller, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Shelton, Chairman.

Recording Secretary: Alexandria Bryan.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On November 14, 2023, Mr. Michael Henderson was interviewed by Board Member, Ms. Julie Globokar via WebEx at Dixon Correctional Center, where he has resided since March 2018. The interview began at 9:04am and ended at 9:11am. No other individuals were present to speak on Mr. Michael Henderson's behalf. Mr. Michael Henderson appeared of relatively flat affect but engaged readily in the interview with brief responses.

Mr. Michael Henderson was 65 years old at the time of the interview and is serving a 60–120-year sentence for a murder that occurred on September 15, 1976, when he was 18 years old. He also has a 4-year consecutive sentence for a criminal sexual assault committed while in Illinois Department of Corrections custody in 1987. His current Mandatory Supervised Release date if not granted relief by this Board is 2032.

It should be noted when interpreting his responses that Mr. Michael Henderson has documented cognitive limitations; in his assessment for fitness to stand trial in the 1970s it was also noted that he may be vulnerable to leading questions out of a desire for the approval of interviewers.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Mr. Michael Henderson was arrested at the age of 18 for the death of his 87-year-old neighbor, Ms. Zelder Wilson, who was found lying deceased and naked from the waist down on the floor of her apartment on September 15th, 1976. A pathologist testified that her cause of death was asphyxiation and blunt trauma to the head. According to a confession given to the police, Mr. Michael Henderson stated he had asked Ms. Zelder Wilson for a glass of water, and she invited him in. He drank some of the water, took the glass to the sink, and then said he did not want any water, picked up a knife, and told her he "wanted some pussy" and to go into the bedroom. She complied and asked him not to kill her.



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According to his confession, he turned up the stereo as they went back to the kitchen, where he knocked her down, picked up a knife, and stabbed her four or five times. He then went to her bathroom and washed his hands, leaving blood on the bathroom sink. Early that afternoon Mr. Michael Henderson encountered a man who lived in the same apartment complex. He told the man that he had seen someone running out of the victim's apartment and asked him to check on the victim. Mr. Michael Henderson and that neighbor then proceeded to the victim's apartment, where the body was discovered.

Mr. Michael Henderson was deemed competent to stand trial, although expert witnesses agreed that he had significant cognitive delays, with an IQ that placed him in the category of "borderline intelligence." He was found guilty by a jury and sentenced by the judge, who stated that "because of the brutality in this case, a severe sentence should be imposed, it was a heinous and brutal murder," although he explicitly left assessments of Mr. Michael Henderson's rehabilitation to this Board.

Mr. Michael Henderson unsuccessfully appealed his conviction on a number of grounds, including that he had not intelligently and voluntarily waived his right to remain silent, the State had failed to prove his fitness for trial, and he was not proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

The murder of Ms. Zelder Wilson was Mr. Michael Henderson's first adult arrest.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Michael Henderson has been in continuous custody for approximately 47 years. He has received more than 100 tickets in this time, including several sexual misconduct tickets, and in 1987 he received a new conviction for a sexual assault. His designation as "predator" within Illinois Department of Corrections was lifted in 2011. His last ticket for fighting was in 2006, when he allegedly threw a tray at a correctional officer. While he has received at least 21 tickets since his transfer to Dixon Correctional Center in 2018, they have generally been trending downward in severity; eight of these tickets were for sexual misconduct, all for masturbation, and his six most recent tickets are all for disobeying a direct order due to his refusal to leave restrictive housing. As of July 2023, he has not received any tickets for more than a year.

Much of his time has been served in restrictive housing/protective custody, or segregation, often at Mr. Henderson's request. Early in his incarceration Mr. Henderson was assessed as being vulnerable to exploitation from "more sophisticated and aggressive residents" based on his limited cognitive ability and his size. He has frequently requested placement in, or refused to leave, or grieved the removal of protective custody.

This is relevant to his programming history as those in protective custody or segregation are often unable to attend programs. Mr. Henderson filed grievances in 1997 and 2004 in efforts to access programming or employment but he was denied for this reason. Early in his incarceration he pursued a transfer to an institution where he said he would feel safer attending programming, but his request was denied.



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Recent assessments have erroneously indicated that Mr. Henderson never engaged in programming within Illinois Department of Corrections; this may be reflective of his poor reporting of his own biography. His master file reflects that he was an ABE participant in the late 1980s and again in the early 1990s and was enrolled in academics at Graham Correctional Center for a time, and in a literacy program in the early 1990s. He appears to have learned to read since his incarceration.

Similarly, while several recent assessments indicate that Mr. Henderson has never held a job within Illinois Department of Corrections, his master file reflects assignments in dining, as a protective custody helper, as a gallery worker, and in the employee kitchen, all early in his incarceration; he was let go from the employee kitchen in 1986 due to his high need for supervision and his lack of completion of assignments. In the early 1990s he was reported as having improved institutional adjustment with employment in Pontiac Correctional Center's employee dining room. He was waitlisted for janitorial services and road crew in 1996. There is documentation of Mr. Henderson's expressions of interest in pursuing work assignments through the early 2000s.

There's no substantive information to support that Mr. Henderson has ever been gang affiliated. There was a note from Graham Correctional Center in 1986 identifying him as a Black Disciple, but it didn't state on what basis. In 1979, he refused a housing assignment out of concern for his safety due to having previously been attacked due to his refusal to join a gang, and over the years many of his requests for protective custody were on the basis of wanting to avoid exposure to gangs.

Mr. Michael Henderson was able to maintain some family ties early in his incarceration, but his connections appear to have waned after his mother's passing in 1994. It isn't clear from the files that he's received any family visits since 1993. As of August 2022, his next of kin form listed "no immediate family, nor emergency contacts." In his interview, when asked whether he stays in touch with family, he stated that he does by phone and writing, but when asked with whom he has stayed in touch, he responded his mom (who passed in 1994) and a couple of his siblings.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

When Mr. Michael Henderson was asked why he was in prison, he responded "I can't really explain." He denied memory of his arrest, and when asked if he remembers hearing others talk about what might have happened to lead to his imprisonment, he initially responded "my family," but when prompted further, stated "not really."

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Michael Henderson was asked if he has any thoughts on where he would live, if he were able to live somewhere different than where he is, or if he's spoken to anyone about possibilities. He stated no. He presents with no parole plan.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Cook County State's Attorney has written several letters of opposition, dating from 1985 to 2020. Their most recent letter voiced concern for the severity of the offense, lack of rehabilitative



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efforts, poor institutional history, and lack of parole plan, the same basis on which they had requested a 5-year set; they also requested that should Mr. Henderson ever be granted parole, he be evaluated as a sexually violent person prior to release.

EN BANC HISTORY

Mr. Henderson has been in front of this Board approximately 25 times for parole consideration, dating back to 1985. He has received some longer sets, primarily 3-year sets in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Mr. Michael Henderson has yet to receive a single vote for release.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Globokar stated that he has no assistance, or family. She stated that she would like that the parole board to keep an eye on him while he is still in custody.

Ms. Miller stated that the victim's family should not have to continue to go through this yearly. Mr. Henderson's behavior in Illinois Department of Corrections has been horrible. She stated that he would be deemed a sexually dangerous person according to the Attorney General's Office.

Chairman Shelton stated that 5 years is a long time but states that he agrees the difficulty of that this opposes for the victim's family to address every year.

Ms. Globokar stated that Mr. Michael Henderson was convicted of the heinous act of murdering his 87-year-old neighbor in 1976. Mr. Michael Henderson has faced several unique challenges in his institutional adjustment since his incarceration at the young age of 18, and some of his positive efforts through the years have failed to be properly captured in recent counseling assessments and Board interviews. She stated that his overall institutional adjustment has been uneven, and he has continued to demonstrate generally poor adjustment in general population and a preference for remaining in protective or restrictive housing which calls into question his ability to adapt in the free world. She stated that he lacks a parole plan and community support.

End of discussion.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (JGLOBOKAR-LMILLER). Motion prevails by a unanimous vote.

Motion for a 3-year set (LMILLER-RSHOFFNER). Motion prevails by a 12-1 vote. Members voting in favor of this motion were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Miller, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Tupy, and Chairman Shelton. Ms. Globokar dissented.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Michael Henderson's case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Michael Henderson's parole release at this time would deprecate the serious nature of the offenses and promote a lack of respect for the law.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION December 14, 2023

Individual in custody's Name: Vigil Robinson IDOC Number: C90056

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on December 14, 2023, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Virgil Robinson, C90056.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Miller, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Shelton, Chairman.

Recording Secretary: Alexandria Bryan.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On November 6, 2023, Mr. Virgil Robinson, C90056, was interviewed by Board Member, Mr. Roger Heaton while incarcerated at Lawrence Correctional Center via WebEx. He was not represented by anyone, and there were no other witnesses presented in support of his parole. Mr. Virgil Robinson was polite, attentive, and engaged throughout the interview. Mr. Robinson was able to represent himself in throughout the interview, although at times it was necessary to repeat his answers back to him to confirm that I had understood him correctly. The cadence of his voice sometimes made him difficult to understand.

Mr. Robinson is 72 years old and has been incarcerated for approximately 46 years. Generally, he is in good health.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Mr. Robinson, at the age of 25, committed an armed robbery of a cab driver on August 10, 1976. During a bench trial for that offense a year later, on September 21, 1977, the victim cab driver had completed the first half of his testimony, and the trial was continued for two days to complete cross examination. While on bond during those two days, Mr. Robinson determined that he would not go to prison for this crime and devised a plan with a co-offender Mr. Leroy White and a girlfriend Ms. Renee Jones who had been with him during the armed robbery. He acquired a .38 caliber handgun and a stocking from Ms. Renee Jones to cover his face. He obtained the victim's initial home address information from police reports for the original crime with the intent of finding the victim and executing him prior to his testimony resuming in the trial. However, the victim had since moved from that address, so Mr. Virgil Robinson attempted to look up the victim by name in the phone book and found only one other listing with that surname. He had his girlfriend Ms. Renee Jones called the number to attempt to confirm that the victim Mr. Tyrone Taylor in fact lived there. When Ms. Renee Jones



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asked if Mr. Tyrone Taylor was home, the person who answered the phone asked, “which one?”. Mr. Robinson then traveled to the apartment in a car with Mr. Leroy White, armed with the handgun. Mr. Leroy White testified it was in the trunk and that Mr. Virgil Robinson took it out when they got to the victim’s apartment building and put it back in the trunk after he came back out of the apartment building. Mr. Virgil Robinson was buzzed into the building. Unbeknownst to Mr. Virgil Robinson, he had arrived at the home of a completely unrelated individual with the same last name as his victim. The father of this individual answered the door, and upon seeing a stocking-covered face and handgun, attempted to shut the door. Mr. Virgil Robinson stopped the man from fully shutting the door to the apartment and fired 3 shots into the man under the assumption that he was shooting the testifying victim from his armed robbery case. The shooting victim survived long enough to give a report to the police, but ultimately succumbed to his injuries and died. A palm print was found on the door of the murder victim’s apartment which matched Mr. Virgil Robinson’s palm. When Mr. Tyrone Taylor, the original testifying victim of the armed robbery, reported to trial on September 23, 1977 to finish testifying. Mr. Virgil Robinson realized he had shot the wrong person and admitted as much Mr. Leroy White, the friend who was in the car with him the night of the murder. Mr. Virgil Robinson was arrested at home the following day, found hiding behind a dresser and in possession of a firearm. Mr. Virgil Robinson claimed he couldn’t have committed the shooting or been pulled over by the police in the neighborhood shortly before the shooting as police witnesses claimed because he didn’t have a car. However, his sister confirmed that he had borrowed her car throughout that time, continuing until September 23rd, 1977. Mr. Virgil Robinson also asserted an alibi during the evening of the shooting that he was allegedly with another girlfriend Ms. Diane Keith that night, but that other girlfriend confirmed in a police interview that she had only seen Mr. Virgil Robinson outside around 5 p.m. and not again until 11 p.m. on the evening of the murder. Mr. Virgil Robinson was convicted of the armed robbery and sentenced to 4 to 6 years in 1977. While subsequently on trial for the murder, Mr. Virgil Robinson attempted to escape from custody twice. He was convicted of the murder and sentenced in 1979 to serve 200 to 600 years. It was noted at his sentencing that if Mr. Virgil Robinson had successfully murdered Mr. Tyrone Taylor, who was a testifying witness against him, instead of another innocent party, he would have been eligible for the death penalty.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Virgil Robinson was arrested over 20 times in the period from 1970 until he was convicted of the armed robbery in 1977. His arrests included assault, theft, battery, unlawful use of weapons, aggravated assaults, resisting arrest, burglaries, and ultimately the armed robbery before committing murder. Mr. Virgil Robinson argues that all these arrests were misdemeanors or crimes that produced supervision sentences, but never any felonies. He was under supervision and probation on more than one occasion and often violated those conditions because of his numerous offenses.

Several years into his incarceration following the murder conviction in 1984, Mr. Virgil Robinson was convicted of Aggravated Battery causing Great Bodily Harm to a corrections officer after battering him with a mop handle. He was sentenced to a consecutive sentence of 4 years. Mr. Virgil Robinson has previously stated in a PRB interview that he was in segregation at the time of the offense. He refused to enter his cell as instructed, then began fighting with the officer who was directing him into his cell and during this incident he assaulted the officer with the mop handle. Mr. Virgil Robinson stated that he plead guilty to this offense.



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INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Virgil Robinson's institutional adjustment is a troublesome one, marked with a life of institutional infractions and little in the way of rehabilitation, family, or community support. He has two sisters, one son, and a niece. He has no contact with any of them. Mr. Virgil Robinson has no letters of support for his parole petition submitted from family or community. Mr. Virgil Robinson has engaged in almost no programming or services to date. Mr. Virgil Robinson has a lengthy ticket history that includes a significant amount of physical violence including injury to both inmates and corrections officers. He has eleven pages of tickets prior to 2000. Since 2000, Mr. Virgil Robinson has accrued 35 major tickets including 16 assaults or other acts of violence, and 2 minor tickets. From 1980 to 1992, there is documentation of a total of 15 years of good conduct credit time being revoked. In addition, there is the 1984 Aggravated Battery conviction which added 4 years to his sentence. There is a note in the 2021 report for Offender Overview that the petitioner has Security Threat Group Affiliation as a member of the Black Disciples and is designated as having a moderate aggression level. Mr. Virgil Robinson claims he has no affiliation, and that he renounced sometime in 2018-2019 when he came to Lawrence Correctional Center because, "there are no gangs in Lawrence." His penultimate ticket for violence was in October of 2019 for a serious threat to break a television and stab his cell mate. His last major ticket for violent behavior was for fighting on October 4, 2021 when he was the primary aggressor while hitting his cell mate first during an altercation. Mr. Virgil Robinson stated in a previous interview that the cell mate was a petty thief.

Mr. Virgil Robinson has a minimal work history in Illinois Department of Corrections. He worked in Cold Storage in 1991 while at Pontiac Correctional Center, he worked in the Taylor Shop in 2000 while in Stateville Correctional Center, and there is a note about a Dietary Assignment from March 5, 2021 to August 21, 2021 while in Lawrence Correctional Center.

Mr. Virgil Robinson appears to have spent 7 years and some months in segregation since 2001. He is currently assigned a medium security risk with no escape risk. He has been on A Grade since April 4, 2020 but is still designated as a moderate aggression level. As recently as 2017, Mr. Virgil Robinson was a maximum level security risk with a moderate escape risk.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Virgil Robinson has asserted since 1979 that he is innocent of the murder. He expressed sympathy for the victim's family's loss but, he does not feel guilt. He is adamant that he was with his girlfriend Ms. Diane Keith, and therefore could not have committed this murder. He also expressed that he could prove that the police fabricated the evidence to prove he did it, claiming that the police never actually collected the palm print from the door and that they staged the evidence against him. Mr. Virgil Robinson acknowledges that he was making poor choices in life at the time of the offenses, namely the armed robbery, but he didn't commit the murder.

Mr. Virgil Robinson advised me in the interview that in May 2023 he was granted relief from a judgment that had been entered many years ago denying his ability to appeal a decision relating to his effort to challenge the reliability of the palm print evidence used in his trial. He advised me that the



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circuit court had tampered with the date of his notice of appeal back at the time of the ruling against him, and that prevented the appellate court from hearing his appeal because it concluded that his appeal was untimely. He stated that he now expects to be able to pursue the appeal that he was denied. He offered to send me a copy of the May 2023 ruling to this effect.

He also advised me that he filed a federal lawsuit in December 2021 alleging that he was denied his right to due process based on the use of the falsely manufactured palm print evidence at trial. I also requested that he provide me any information from that case that would support his claims that false evidence was used to convict him.

On November 20, 2023, our office received a set of documents from Mr. Virgil Robinson, which included pages 6-9 of an Illinois appellate court opinion, which appears to summarize the analysis rejecting Mr. Virgil Robinson's claim that his appeal had been timely filed. Pages 2-5 of an Illinois appellate court opinion, which appears to be a 2022 summary of the appellate procedural history of Mr. Virgil Robinson's multiple attempts to challenge the palm print evidence used against him at trial, but ultimately rejecting his claim that he had a cognizable claim of newly discovered evidence that warrants a current challenge to the palm print evidence used in his trial. A February 9, 2005 affidavit of Mr. Leroy White, the co-offender who rode in the car with Mr. Virgil Robinson to the shooting/murder incident, asserting that he lied to assist the prosecution in Mr. Virgil Robinson's trial, in exchange for a lenient plea deal in an unrelated double homicide that Mr. Leroy White was charged with. A two-page typed statement which appears to be a police interview of Ms. Diane Keith, Mr. Virgil Robinson's girlfriend, who he asserts was his alibi witness on the night of the murder, it is dated September 25, 1977. In the statement, she asserts that she saw Mr. Virgil Robinson at 5 p.m. on the night of the murder, and again at 11 p.m. on the night of the murder, along with Mr. Leroy White. A two-page summary order of the Illinois Appellate Court, dated May 30, 2023, denying his efforts to appeal a circuit court order, which had also ruled against him on a post-conviction challenge. The Appellate Court ruled that his multiple attempts to appeal were untimely, and that the court had no jurisdiction to entertain the appeal. A letter from an attorney who had represented Mr. Virgil Robinson written to the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, explaining her efforts to investigate and pursue Mr. Virgil Robinson's claims that the palm print evidence had been manufactured by the police, and was unreliable, as a part of her representation of Mr. Virgil Robinson in 2017 to 2018. Mr. Virgil Robinson had apparently filed an ARDC complaint against her, accusing her of failing to pursue his palm print challenge in the way that he directed. There is no indication of what action, if any, ARDC took in response to the complaint and her response. Confusingly, the letter is dated April 12, 2015, even though it discusses actions taken in 2017 to 2018.

PAROLE PLANS

At the time of the interview, Mr. Virgil Robinson's parole plan was not well developed. Mr. Virgil Robinson would like to be, and acknowledged that he will need to be, placed at a halfway house. He hopes to find a job, but states, "I have no skills." Mr. Virgil Robinson does not appear to have health issues serious enough to prevent him from working. As noted, he does not have community or family support at this time.



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OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Cook County State's Attorney submitted a long letter of strong opposition in February of 2021. A lengthy account of the statement of facts is given followed by opposition based on deprecation of seriousness of the offense due to his claim of actual innocence mixed with the severity of committing a pre-meditated attempted murder of a testifying victim in a criminal proceeding resulting in the completed murder of an innocent victim. Opposition is also based on a parole being likely to cause a substantially adverse effect on institutional discipline given his track record of violence toward inmates and staff throughout the entirety of his incarceration. As well as for a substantial risk that Mr. Virgil Robinson won't comply with conditions of parole given his failure to comply with rules in the institution, and the fact that he violated his bond when he committed the murder.

EN BANC HISTORY

Mr. Virgil Robinson first became eligible for parole consideration in 1999. He has been presented for parole eleven times. As best determined, Mr. Virgil Robinson has only received two votes in favor of granting parole, and those were in February 2021. He received no votes for release on December 15, 2022. He received 3-year sets in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2017. He received a 5-year set in 2012.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Bohland stated that he had this case 2 years ago, and no accountability has been taken and no changes have been made.

Mr. Heaton stated that he doesn't like to put long sets on individuals who do not have victims being affected each year.

Mr. Heaton stated that while Mr. Virgil Robinson's violent behaviors in Illinois Department of Corrections have diminished in the recent years, his lengthy criminal history, the severity, and nature of the several offenses of his conviction, his denial of responsibility for the murder, and his violent behaviors in prison through the vast majority of his years in custody. As well as his lack of a well-developed parole plan all weight against granting him parole at the present time.

End of discussion.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (RHEATON-JBOHLAND). Motion prevails by a unanimous vote.

Motion for a 3-year set (RHEATON-JBOHLAND). Motion prevails by a unanimous vote.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Virgil Robinson's case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Virgil Robinson's parole release at this time would deprecate the serious nature of the offenses and promote a lack of respect for the law.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION December 14, 2023

Individual in custody's Name: Robert Gorham IDOC Number: C70122

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on December 14, 2023, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Robert Gorham, C70122.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Miller, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Shelton, Chairman.

Recording Secretary: Alexandria Bryan.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On November 1st, 2023, Mr. Robert Gorham was interviewed by Board Member, Mr. Matthew Coates via Webex video conference at Western Illinois Correctional Center. Mr. Robert Gorham represented himself without an attorney present and his interview began at 9:22am and ended at 10:33am.

Mr. Robert Gorham was put together with a blue buttoned up shirt and prepared for the interview. During our interview, Mr. Robert Gorham's demeanor was very polite, and he communicated clearly without issue for the duration of our interview. Mr. Robert Gorham answered every question presented and was a productive communicator.

Mr. Robert Gorham was in fair health. Mr. Robert Gorham also shared that he felt he was in good mental health.

Mr. Robert Gorham is currently 72 years old and has been incarcerated for over 46 years. Mr. Robert Gorham has been at Western Illinois Correctional Center since October 9th, 2019. He is a low risk, medium security individual and is designated a predator.

Mr. Robert Gorham was convicted of First-Degree Murder and sentenced on January 10th, 1977 to 100 to 200 years.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

After a Jury trial, Mr. Robert Gorham was convicted of the murder of Mr. Kenneth Thompson. Mr. Gorham, then age 23, was the boyfriend of the victim's wife, Ms. Kathleen Thompson. They met in



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late October or early November 1974. Mr. Robert Gorham and Ms. Kathleen Thompson developed a plan to murder her husband because he wanted a divorce and was seeking custody of their children.

Ms. Kathleen Thompson told Mr. Gorham that because of her husband's large insurance policy she would be better off with him dead than alive. Mr. Gorham agreed to kill the victim if Ms. Kathleen Thompson would split the insurance proceeds with him. After the murder, Ms. Kathleen Thompson gave Mr. Gorham part of the insurance money.

Mr. Gorham, who had recently been released from Menard Correctional Center after serving four years for an aggravated battery conviction, began planning for the murder. He obtained a .45 caliber automatic pistol from friend in Indiana. He and his friend went to an old, abandoned farmhouse and test fired the gun. Mr. Gorham also contacted his trusted friend Mr. Mike Rose to provide an alibi. If police asked any questions of Mr. Mike Rose and his wife Mary, they were to inform the police that Mr. Gorham was with them all night.

Mr. Gorham met the victim one time the week before the murder to make sure he had the right person. Previously, Ms. Kathleen Thompson told her husband that she lent Mr. Robert Gorham, her friend, \$25 and that Mr. Robert Gorham wanted to repay the money.

On January 10, 1975, Mr. Gorham had Mr. Kenneth Thompson pick him up from Mr. Mike Rose's house and drive him to Thrifty Mart in Park Forest. There he purchased gloves so that he would not leave any fingerprints. When Mr. Kenneth Thompson came home that night, Mr. Robert Gorham met him.

Mr. Gorham told the victim he could repay the \$25 he owed him, but he needed a ride to a friend's house in Chicago Heights to get the money. Mr. Gorham then lured Mr. Kenneth Thompson to an alley on the east side of Chicago Heights under the guise of retrieving the money. Once in the alley, Mr. Gorham got out of the van and walked through a gate and into a gangway while Mr. Kenneth Thompson remained in the van.

Mr. Gorham returned and indicated that the person with the money was not there and walked around the back of the van and, as Mr. Kenneth Thompson turned toward him, he shot him. The bullet entered the middle portion of the victim's right eyebrow and exited at the back of the head behind his left ear. Mr. Kenneth Thompson's body fell and landed in part on Mr. Gorham, leaving his hands and coat bloodied.

Originally, Mr. Gorham planned to make the scene look like a robbery. However, when he saw all of the blood on himself, he decided to run and clean up. He hid the gun under a garbage can, then ran to another alley and discarded his bloody coat in a garbage can. He fled to the Key Note Club and washed his hands. Next, he walked to the home of Mr. Mike Rose, his alibi. He told him that he had just killed Kathleen's husband.

The two of them went to the Go Club and bought some beer then returned to Mr. Mike Rose's house and drank it. About a week after the murder, Mr. Robert Gorham returned to the alley where he had discarded the gun and retrieved it.



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After the murder, Ms. Kathleen Thompson gave Mr. Gorham part of the insurance money where he purchased a motorcycle, a boat, and a car.

Mr. Gorham returned the weapon to the friend whom he had borrowed it. This friend then sold it to a third party who dismantled it and discarded the barrel, slide, and frame once he learned that it may have been issued in a crime.

However, he retained the firing pin, firing spring, and extractor and turned these pieces over to investigators after they contacted him. From these pieces, forensic experts were able to determine that the gun containing these parts was used to fire the casing found at the scene.

After an intensive investigation, Mr. Robert Gorham was arrested in April 1976 for Mr. Kenneth Thompson's murder. Mr. Gorham gave a detailed confession describing his participation in the planning and execution of the murder. In his statement to investigators, he admitted to shooting Mr. Kenneth Thompson while he and the victim were inside the victim's van in Chicago Heights. Mr. Gorham was convicted after a jury trial. On January 10th, 1977, he was sentenced to 100 to 200 years imprisonment.

Ms. Kathleen Thompson was indicted for Conspiracy to Commit Murder and she was convicted and sentenced to serve 1 to 10 years in prison. She also testified at Mr. Robert Gorham's trial. Mr. Mike Rose was charged with obstruction of justice.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

From the age of 17 to the age of 24, Mr. Robert Gorham's had a troubling pattern of addiction and committing crimes and was arrested 14 times. Prior to his murder conviction, Mr. Robert Gorham was convicted of aggravated battery and unlawful use of weapon from an incident that occurred on October 8th, 1971. On this date, he was with a couple friends drinking out behind his parents' barn. They had a firearm, and they were having fun shooting rats in the barn. It came up during their conversation that a guy they knew, named Mr. Jack Sharkey had a stash of drugs at his house. They all decided to go out to his house to rob him. The person Mr. Robert Gorham was with, drove and knew where Mr. Jack Sharkey lived.

The driver drove them to the residence and dropped them off. They thought Mr. Jack Sharkey had his own place, but it turned out he lived with his mother, 65-year-old Ms. Maria Sharkey. They went to the back door of the residence, Mr. Robert Gorham armed with a sawed off shot gun and proceeded to knock on the door. Ms. Maria Sharkey answered the door and stated Jack was not home. As they turned to leave, Mr. Robert Gorham in the process of uncocking the gun, stated he accidentally let the hammer slip, causing the gun to go off, shooting Ms. Maria Sharkey. After this occurred, him and the co-offender fled. The victim, Ms. Maria Sharkey was hit in the face, right shoulder, and chest. She was hospitalized for 11 days and had to undergo surgery and was left with permanent scars to her face, chest, neck, and arms.



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Mr. Robert Gorham and co-offender were captured moments later. He was charged with Attempt Murder, Aggravated Battery, and Unlawful Use of a Weapon. He was found not guilty of attempted murder, and guilty of Aggravated Battery and Unlawful Use of a Weapon in a jury trial. Subsequently, he was sentenced to 2 to 4 years in Illinois Department of Corrections and was paroled on March 1st, 1974. His parole was discharged September 1st, 1974.

During that stint of parole, Mr. Robert Gorham was arrested on August 18th, 1974, and charged with possession of a hypodermic syringe needle.

After committing the murder of Mr. Kenneth Thompson in January of 1975, but prior to being apprehended over a year later in April 1976, Mr. Robert Gorham committed two burglaries during that time. On September 4th, 1975 he admitted that in a statement to homicide investigators after he was apprehended. He pled guilty and was convicted of the two burglaries along with possession of a controlled substance. He was sentenced to a term of 5 to 15 years for the burglaries and 3 to 9 years for the possession of a controlled substance, both of those terms running concurrent to his murder sentence.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Robert Gorham's institutional adjustment has many positives, as well as many areas that raise concern. Beginning with his disciplinary history. Throughout his entire incarceration Mr. Gorham has received 53 tickets. In the beginning of his incarceration, he was constantly getting into trouble and earning disciplinary tickets. Since January of 1998, to present day, Mr. Robert Gorham has received 13 disciplinary tickets. His tickets range from disobeying a direct order, theft, damage or misuse of property, insolence and trading or trafficking.

Mr. Gorham's most recent ticket is from March 2020, which was for Contraband/Unauthorized property. The report stated it was for an altered extension cord.

Mr. Gorham's last logged visit was in 2018, from his friend Ms. Ameri Kalfeta.

He went 9 years prior to that without having a ticket. In March 2011, he was ticketed for fighting in the chow line.

His ticket in January 2010 was the most concerning ticket, which was for dangerous contraband, that being four large, straightened paper clips and for Sexual Assault of an Inmate.

Mr. Robert Gorham's programming history has many positives. In 1981 Mr. Robert Gorham earned his GED and had taken some college courses such as history, political science, and art appreciation.

He had held several jobs over the years such as working as a clerk at Galesburg and in the bakery at Illinois River Correctional Center. Most notably, he passed the written and practical exams to become a licensed barber and worked as a barber for correctional officers and inmates. Mr. Gorham shared they no longer have the officer's barbershop, but back when they did, he used to cut the Warden's hair and many of the officers. He stated, this was back in the 1990s and early 2000s.



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Mr. Gorham did complete anger management and a 12-week substance abuse treatment program in 2001 while at Pinckneyville Correctional Center. Both of those certificates were in his master file.

Mr. Gorham also served on the Board of Directors as Internal Vice President of Lifer's Inc, which was a nonprofit organization that used the proceeds to fund improvements in the living conditions at the prison for all inmates. This included buying a vacuum cleaner, scrubbers, cable TV and donating to charities. The remainder of the proceeds went towards fulfilling the needs of individuals around the prison.

Mr. Gorham stated he serves as a mentor many inmates as he has become a leader in the religious community. He is a practicing catholic and regularly attends mass. Mr. Gorham states this is what fills up most of his time now. There were several character letters in Mr. Gorham's master file that showed he had developed good relationships with many inmates and did serve as a mentor to them.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Robert Gorham stated he met Ms. Kathleen Thompson in a bar, and they developed a relationship. Ms. Kathleen Thompson began hinting that she wanted to hurt her husband. She began telling Mr. Robert Gorham how her husband was abusive, trying to divorce her and take her kids away. Ms. Kathleen Thompson began discussing how her husband was worth more to her dead than alive. She discussed with him her husband's insurance policy. From that point, Mr. Robert Gorham agreed to be involved.

During this period of his life, the most important thing to him was sex and drugs. Mr. Robert Gorham stated he had a severe heroin addiction and would do anything to fuel that addiction. Ms. Kathleen Thompson would provide him heroin and he was dependent on her for that. Mr. Gorham takes full responsibility for the murder and stated the statement of facts was accurate.

Following the murder, he stayed with Ms. Kathleen Thompson and his drug addiction became even worse and had gotten out of hand. Then he eventually checked himself into an in-patient drug treatment program in Peoria called Stone Hedge. That is where he was arrested, returned to Chicago on the murder charge and confessed to the murder.

Regarding remorse, he shared "His life has been a series of regrets and remorse. His whole entire life has been wasted in prison and he looks back on it and thinks what a fool he was for not considering Mr. Thompson, his loved ones, his children, or anything else." He stated " I pray to God that I have been forgiven, and I believe God knows I'm sorry. I can't undo what is done. If I could, I would have done that a long time ago."

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Robert Gorham's parole plan is to parole to St. Leonard's Ministries. He did provide an acceptance letter from St. Leonard Ministries' dated February 6, 2023.



STATE OF ILLINOIS
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PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

Donald Shelton, Chair

EN BANC HISTORY

Mr. Robert Gorham first became eligible for parole consideration in 1985. He has been presented for parole 31 times prior to today. Throughout that time, Mr. Robert Gorham received 4 votes to grant parole in 2009, 2 votes to grant parole in 2019.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Miller stated Mr. Gorham is 72 years old, but when he was 53 years old he was still fighting, when he was 52 years old he committed a sexual assault, and when he was 52 years old he received a ticket for contraband. She stated that she is questioning if he is conforming to rules and regulations after all of these years. She stated that even at his age he could still potentially commit another crime.

Mr. Shelton stated that he previously had this case. He stated that he was not prosecuted for the sexual assault, Illinois Department of Corrections handled the case correctly. It appears that he had planned that sexual assault. The victim had marks on his neck from the object that Mr. Robert Gorham put up to his neck. Mr. Robert Gorham sent IA a letter stating that he is too old and doesn't have a sex drive anymore. At his hearing he admitted that he did have sex, but it was consensual. He stated that he knew that the evidence was collected and that is when he changed his story. He continues to have these behaviors and then deny his accountability. By the time that this case was re-docketed the second time the victim was out on parole, and he was uncooperative to come back.

Mr. Coates stated that Mr. Gorham has been incarcerated for a long time. There is no question that from the age of 17 to 24 and often throughout his incarceration, he was on a path of destruction. He stated that he wants to commend Mr. Gorham on the progress he appears to be making. For that past 10 years he has only received 1 ticket, which was for an altered extension cord in 2020.

Mr. Coates stated that what gives him the most concern today, is in his response when they discussed his sexual assault ticket. Part of rehabilitation for him is taking some level of accountability. Mr. Robert Gorham certainly does for the murder of Mr. Kenneth Thompson, along with many of his disciplinary infractions and criminal history. He stated when they discussed his sexual assault ticket, he responded as if it did not happen at all. Given the evidence that is substantiated in the disciplinary reports, that is troublesome. He stated that he understands how difficult it can be to admit a shameful act, such as that. When he thinks of public safety and is there a risk he would not conform to reasonable conditions of parole, given his response in addressing that ticket, it did not give him full confidence that he no longer poses a risk to public safety. He stated that he does believe Mr. Gorham is on a more productive and positive path and he would like to see him demonstrate following the rules of the institution a bit longer and towards taking some level of accountability for the sexual assault disciplinary infraction.

End of discussion.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (MCOATES-LMILLER). Motion prevails by a unanimous vote.

Motion for a 3-year set (DSHELTON-LMILLER). Motion prevails by a 10-3 vote. Members voting in favor of this motion were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Miller, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Chairman Shelton. Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, and Mr. Tupy dissented.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Robert Gorham's case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Robert Gorham's parole release at this time would deprecate the serious nature of the offenses and promote a lack of respect for the law.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."