

PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET: MEETING OF DECEMBER 17, 2015

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open en banc session at 319 E. Madison, Springfield, IL, on December 17, 2015 at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following inmates:

C86186	WILLIAM HOWELL
C15289	CHESTER WEGER
C81347	OTIS DORSEY
C71910	BENNIE JONES

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

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mr. Ed Bowers	X	
Edith Crigler	<u>X</u>	
Salvador Diaz	<u>X</u>	
Mr. Gary Duncan	<u>X</u>	
Mr. Donald Wayne Dunn	<u>X</u>	
Mr. Pete Fisher	X	
Vonetta Harris	X	
Tom Johnson	X	
Mr. Daryl Jones	X	
Mr. William Norton	X	
Mrs. Aurthur Mae Perkins	X	
Mr. Donald Shelton	X	
Chairman Craig Findley	X	

13 Members Present

The Recording Secretary presented the following minutes for approval:
Open Session Minutes from **November 2015. (TLJ-EB)** . Leave

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

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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET OPEN SESSION—DECEMBER 17, 2015

Inmate Name: **WILLIAM HOWELL** IDOC Number & Institution: **C86186**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open en banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL on December 17, 2015, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for, IDOC #.

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

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

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

Mr. Duncan stated that Mr. Howell, having previously pled guilty to murder in Madison County, Illinois, is serving a sentence of 35-100 years. He was sentenced pursuant to the law which was effective prior to 1978. He has served 38 years and presently has a projected sentence discharge date of 02/21/2027.

The Board carefully reviewed Mr. Howell's case including a review of the circumstances of the murder, his other criminal history, and evidence of rehabilitation, his institutional adjustment and the strength of his plans for reentry to the community.

The Board discussed the facts of the case. Mr. Howell and a companion, Joseph Cunningham, assaulted Mrs. Emma McKinley, a neighbor and acquaintance of Cunningham. During the attack, Cunningham stabbed her repeatedly with paring knife. Howell did the same with a meat fork. She was stabbed more than sixty (60) times. One or both of her assailants applied Vaseline and anally raped her.

A review of his institutional adjustment indicates successful adaptation to prison life and efforts to pursue education and skills that might allow him to earn a living if released.

Mr. Howell claims to have no memory of the events at the time of the murder of Emma McKinley although he gave a confession prior to his guilty plea. Whatever occurred, he blames on his chronic alcoholism.

During his incarceration, the record indicates inmate Howell has done little or nothing to obtain treatment for his diagnosed and self-admitted alcoholism.

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Mr. Howell's parole plan is vague and uncertain. He opines he would like to live with his sister but there is nothing in the record to indicate that is possible. She lives with in a driving distance of slightly more than two hours but has not visited Mr. Howell in many years nor is there any correspondence in the record in which she indicates an intention to house Mr. Howell should he be paroled.

Howell has repeatedly spoken of the magnitude of his problem abusing alcohol. Even in 2005, as he admitted thinking he was there (when friend Cunningham committed the murder), he blamed "...being drunk at the time." for his lack of recall of the murder. The Board recognized his scholastic accomplishment and accepts that he has an intelligent understanding of alcohol dependence as a disorder. However, evidence is lacking that Mr. Howell has sought to understand his particular needs in recovery, including an understanding of the risk of relapse which would accompany the extraordinary stressors of reentry. Moreover, he has not obtained any knowledge of behavioral and cognitive methods of alcohol avoidance when released into a world wherein alcohol is the most readily available drug.

Finally, even if it is true that Mr. Howell has no present recollection of the crime and claims that he often "blacked out" from excessive use of alcohol, there is no evidence other than forced abstinence in the institution that he might not reoffend in a similar state of mind. Nor, in the face of overwhelming evidence, does he accept responsibility and feelings of remorse for the murder of Mrs. McKinley.

It was expressed by the Board that to allow Mr. Howell's parole at the present time would deprecate the seriousness of the offense and would be inconsistent with the ends of justice.

Motion to deny parole (GD-DS). Motion prevails. Leave.

Motion for a 2 year set (GD-TLJ). Motion prevails. Leave.

"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—DECEMBER 17, 2015

Inmate Name: **CHESTER WEGER**

IDOC Number & Institution: **C15289**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open en banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL on December 17, 2015, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Chester Weger, IDOC #C15289.

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

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

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

Mrs. Harris stated that On March 14, 1960, three women checked into the lodge at Starved Rock Park, Illinois. They ate lunch, changed clothes, and left the lodge. They were missing for forty-six hours before their bodies were found in a cave in St. Louis Canyon inside the park. The women died from head wounds, afflicted by a branch.

Illinois State troopers were in charge of the investigation of these killings until September of 1960. Their investigation focused on employees of the lodge and was conducted from a tourist cabin near the lodge. Beginning on March 17, 1960 and for the next five weeks, Weger was questioned almost daily about the case. On March 17, and 19, 1960, Troopers Lowthorp, Raisin and Hall questioned Inmate Weger for 1 ½ to 2 hours about his actions on March 14, 1960. On March 24, Trooper Hall interrogated Chester Weger for 1-½ hours about a shortcut between the Lodge and the canyon where the bodies were found. Hall directed Weger to meet him at the canyon entrance the following Saturday. On Saturday, March 26, Trooper Hall and Chester Weger spent an hour in the canyon. Hall pointed out where the bodies had been found. Afterwards, Hall interrogated Weger for another 1 ½ hours. Later that day, Trooper Lowthorp accompanied Inmate Weger to his apartment; examined his shoes and buckskin jacket that he had worn on March 14, 1960. He took two photographs of Weger wearing the jacket and snipped some fringe from it for chemical testing. The following week, the troopers took fingerprints and hair samples. They also took his buckskin jacket and kept it for 10 days.

On April 20, Trooper Nelson went to Inmate Weger's apartment and picked him up for questioning. He was taken to a hotel room where relays of troopers interrogated him for twelve hours. During this period, the Illinois State Crime Lab subjected Inmate Weger to six lie detector tests. The trooper in charge of the investigation admitted that the intensity of the investigation put a strain on those subjected to it. Inmate Weger did not confess and the State Troopers did not charge him with murder. It was then that LaSalle County authorities took over the investigation.

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Their investigation focused on Inmate Weger on September 26, 1960. For seven weeks, relentless psychological pressures to aid in Inmate Weger's confession. Sheriff's deputies Dummett and Hess, who are both deceased, ordered Inmate Weger to report for a lie detector test on September 26. He was interrogated by then State's Attorney, Harland Warren and the polygraph was given by operator, John Reid and Associates, who administered four lie detector tests.

In mid-October, the State Trooper's began a 24 hour-a-day surveillance for about four weeks until November 16. During this time, the Troopers visited his place of employment (painting contractor); they took pictures of him. They drove Inmate Weger to his home and to work.

Until November 16, 1960, Inmate Weger was questioned every day. On November 17, 1960 at 2:00 a.m. Inmate Weger finally confessed after about 8 hours of interrogation and stated psychological pressures. From 6:40 until 7:45 p.m. Dummett and Hess interrogated him about his movements on March 16, 1960. At 8:00 p.m. Inmate Weger refused to confess, he was shown warrants for his arrests, charging him with murder, a rape, and several robberies and assaults.

At 9:40 p.m., he was placed in a line-up while he was handcuffed. Detective Dummett told inmate Weger that he had been identified. "We know you are guilty" we have enough evidence to convict you, and we will convict you if we have to in that order. You will get the electric chair. At 1:00 a.m., Inmate Weger's wife, father, and mother were brought to the interrogation room. Sheriff Eutsey told Inmate Weger's father "if his son says he did it; he will do everything to see that he doesn't go to the green room".

His wife and mother who bade him an emotional farewell confronted inmate Weger. On one confession, Inmate Weger states that he did it. He stated that after wife and parents left; Deputy Dummett made indecent remarks about his wife so he gave him a confession.

On November 18, 1960, La Salle County grand jury returned three separate indictments, each charging the defendant, Chester Weger with the murder of one of the two women. He was tried on the indictment that charged him with the murder of Lillian Oetting, was found guilty by the jury, and was sentenced to a term of life imprisonment. Inmate Weger has been incarcerated for 55 years. Since admission, April 4, 1961, he has proclaimed innocence. He stated that in the beginning, he signed a written and oral confession as a result of physical and mental abuse. Inmate Weger states that he was led to believe he would receive the electric chair if he did not confess to the murders of the three women. However, the transcript provided in the case file, Inmate Weger states that he never said those things.

Mrs. Harris shared with the Board that Inmate Weger's last parole hearing was December of 2014. He received a ticket in 2013 for refusing housing, 2012 for Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia—could not provide a urine sample. He received the same violation in 2011. Inmate Weger has held several jobs throughout his prison tenure, but none as of recent. He has received his GED while in the institution and enjoys reading.

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He has bad circulation in hand and arm, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma and emphysema. He does push-ups for exercise.

If paroled, the inmate would like to request 3-year institutional parole so he may live with daughter upon release. Right now, he would not be able to live with daughter in LaSalle County. His second choice is to live with Alice Bohme and Ann Rodda family friends in Mendota, IL.

Inmate Chester Weger has served 55 years of a natural life sentence. As of today, he continues to proclaim his innocence. Inmate Weger has a series of supporters to include the Innocence Project who have dutifully aided in support of his release. Inmate Chester Weger appears to be in fairly good health and of sound mind. He also appears to have a solid parole plan of friends and family who will support him upon release.

Mrs. Harris is concerned that Inmate Chester Weger's wish is to parole near LaSalle County, where the murders of the three socialites took place. There are many protestors and family members of the victims who aggressively protest Inmate Weger's release and return to LaSalle County. Other members of the Board shared this concern.

Inmate Weger has participated in many board hearings for parole consideration. He has been consistent in his claim to innocence, but some have testimonies have been altered and not truthfully submitted. Therefore, Mrs. Harris recommended his parole be denied.

Motion to deny parole (VH-DS). Motion prevails 9-4. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Bowers, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fisher, Mrs. Harris, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Norton, Mrs. Perkins, 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."

PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET OPEN SESSION—DECEMBER 17, 2015

Inmate Name: **OTIS DORSEY** IDOC Number & Institution: **C81347**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open en banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL on December 17, 2015 at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Otis Dorsey IDOC # C81347.

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

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

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

Mr. Dorsey was interviewed on October 28, 2015 at Western Correctional Center in Mt Sterling. Otis Dorsey is African American, was born on May 18, 1958 and is currently 57 years of age. He has been an inmate at Western for approximately 14 months. The inmate has been in janitorial work since arriving. He was an inmate at Pinckneyville correctional center from 2007 to 2014 before being transferred to Western CC.

Mr. Dorsey advised Member Fisher that he was diagnosed with hepatitis C in 2011, but has no other health issues. During his incarceration he obtained his GED and 2 associate degrees while at East Moline Correctional Center.

Discipline history includes two disciplinary tickets: one major and one minor in 2014 since his last en banc. He was denied parole in 2013.

Mr. Fisher shared with the Board that Otis Dorsey was sentenced in March of 1978 for the February 10, 1977 offenses of murder and armed robbery along with co offender Ray Howard. Dorsey and Howard went to the apartment of Travis Foster and Boyce Williams at 6819 South Clyde in Chicago. Inside the apartment Dorsey and Howard tied up the victims, Joe Blake and Jenny Clemmons, ransacked the apartment and stole various items. They then beat and stabbed Joe Blake to death, and left a screwdriver in his chest. Jenny Clemmons was also fatally stabbed and shot. Dorsey admitted at the time to the robbery but not the murders. Dorsey was found guilty of both murders and sentenced to 40-90 years for each murder, and 20-50 years for the armed robbery. Dorsey again admitted to the robbery but denied any involvement in the murders.

On March 29, 2005 Otis Dorsey was given the remarkable opportunity of parole by the PRB after serving 27 years of his sentence. Dorsey's parole was without incident for the first year. He

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quickly found work loading UPS and FedEx trucks, and also as a security guard according to his statement. In 2006 he was arrested for attempted PCS, which was dismissed. He was later arrested for retail theft and failed to appear in court and a warrant was issued for his arrest. He stated he began his decline due to his addiction to drugs.

He stated due to his drug use was the cause of a series of events in 2007. On February 4, 2007 he was at his apartment when Falantae Hampton drove his truck to the apartment. Records show Hampton to have been Dorsey's fiancé, but he stated they had an on and off relationship and she had stalked him for 3 months prior to the incident. An argument ensued at the apartment and records state that Dorsey began hitting Hampton in the face, and in the back of the head causing her to fall down the stairs. Dorsey stated he did punch Hampton, and that there were only 3 stairs to the lower level; however he stated they were never upstairs. Records also state Dorsey had a knife, and stated "I am going to kill you bitch". Dorsey stated that Hampton actually had the knife, which she picked up off a workbench in the lower level. He denied making the threatening statement. Hampton had cuts to her hands which Dorsey stated were from struggling for the knife, and she had a laceration across her nose which he stated came from where he struck her. He stated he never stabbed her.

Dorsey then fled the house and entered the vehicle he described as his, and drove off with the victim's cousin in the car who had been waiting outside. Records stated that Dorsey threatened the female cousin and forced her to give him money and her debit card. Dorsey said he dropped her off near her residence, and never threatened her.

On February 12, 2007 Dorsey approached a police officer in a parking lot and asked the officer for money. The officer refused but ran the registration of the vehicle Dorsey had been in and the vehicle returned stolen. The officer attempted to affect a traffic stop on Dorsey's vehicle but a pursuit ensued until Dorsey lost control and crashed the vehicle.

On February 13, 2007, Dorsey was in custody and had been transported to Ingall's Hospital in Harvey for a complaint of pain. At one point Dorsey ran out of the room and out of the hospital when he attempted to car jack an SUV which he could not get out get into gear. Dorsey stated the occupants of the SUV were elderly so he left the vehicle. He attempted to car jack 2 other vehicles without success, and then ran into an adjacent building where he was detained by two witnesses. During that time there was a struggle over one of the witnesses' holstered revolver. The gun was wrested from Dorsey and he was taken into custody.

Dorsey was convicted only of aggravated domestic battery, aggravated fleeing and eluding, attempted aggravated vehicular hijacking. He was given a total of 12 years for those offenses, which he thought were excessive. Mr. Dorsey still has support from his family, including his 96-year-old mother. His fiancée Judith Blakely visits once a month and he has contact through mail with his mother and other family members. Blakely is his only visitor.

Mr. Fisher stated that he found Mr. Dorsey to be well spoken and respectful. Mr. Dorsey stated he was ashamed of himself for violating his parole. He describes himself as "full on" into his Christian faith. He believes his drug usage is a thing of the past. He would like to be involved with the Right Choice Foundation so that he may counsel youth.

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His parole plans would be to reside with either his mother or his fiancé. His main reason for wanting early parole is to care for his 96 year old mother, and be able to spend time with her as long as possible. He advised he has employment opportunity with his family in the catering business, and plans to open a barbecue restaurant. He will remain active in his church.

In conclusion, Mr. Fisher stated that Mr. Dorsey was given a remarkable opportunity in 2005 when he was paroled. Approximately one year later he returned to his history of violence, drug usage, and criminal activity without any consideration for the safety of himself, his family or anyone else. To allow Mr. Dorsey a second chance at parole would certainly deprecate the seriousness of his crimes.

Motion to deny parole (PF-EB) Motion prevails. Leave.

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

PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET OPEN SESSION—DECEMBER 17, 2015

Inmate Name: **BENNIE JONES**

IDOC Number & Institution: **C71910**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open en banc session at 319 E. Madison Street, Springfield, IL, on December 17, 2015, at the 8:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for, Bennie Jones, IDOC # C71910.

Members present were: Chairman C. Findley, E. Bowers, E. Crigler, S. Diaz, G. Duncan, D.W. Dunn, P. Fisher, V. Harris, T. Johnson, D. Jones, W. Norton, A.M. Perkins, and 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 shared with the Board that she interviewed Mr. Bennie Jones for parole consideration April 16, 2015 at the Dixon Correctional Center. Present for the interview were Inmate Jones, W. Kendrick Berry, Senior Paralegal and Ms. Crigler. Factors discussed were his testimony, file review, parole plans and institutional adjustment.

Mrs. Crigler stated that Mr. Jones is serving 50-100 years for attempted murder and rape. Facts of the case indicated that On February 29, 1976, he grabbed a 13-year-old victim as she was walking past a factory building, where he was working as a security guard. He dragged her into the building, raped, beat and stabbed her multiple times. He left her for dead in the boiler room. She was found the next day and hospitalized for almost two months, and received multiple operations for her injuries.

Mrs. Crigler notes that his institutional adjustment is exemplary. His parole plans are to move into an apartment in Harvey, Illinois, which is currently under investigation and should meet all of the requirements for sex offender placement.

Mr. Jones has a job offer with W.R.E consultants working as a full time laborer. He will be performing lead base paint removal. He will be given training for the position and an opportunity to obtain his license. Mr. Jones has letters of support to assist with his re-entry from Michael Barlow Center through St. Leonard's Ministries, Lawrence Suffredin and the Safer Foundation. Winston and Strawn who represents Mr. Jones has also committed to assisting him if he is granted parole.

He will participate in sex offender counseling programs provided by the Chicago IDOC office. Inmate Jones has not participated in sex offender counseling since none of the institutions he has lived in offer such counseling and is willing to abide by what every counseling is required of him.

In conclusion, based on the aforementioned interview of Mr. Jones and a review of all relevant factors. Mrs. Crigler moves to grant parole.

Motion to Grant Parole (EC-CF). Motion prevails 9-4. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mrs. Crigler, Mr. Diaz, Mr. Duncan, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Perkins, 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."