



STATE OF ILLINOIS
JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR
PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION- March 26, 2026

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 26, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following individuals in custody:

B84518	Watkins, Judah (Youthful Parole)
C61247	Brimmer, James* (Indeterminate)
C81522	Bowen, Everett* (Indeterminate)
C77200	Columbo, Patricia* (Indeterminate)
L01404	Pitts, Eddie* (Indeterminate)

**Cook County Case*

The meeting was called to order by Matthew Coates Board Member.

Roll call was taken by Recording Secretary Ellen Wayne.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mr. Jared Bohland	X	
Ms. Tracy Buckley	X	
Mr. Matthew Coates	X	
Mr. Jeffrey Grubbs	X	
Mr. Rodger Heaton	X	
Ms. Holly Lemons	X	
Ms. Robin Shoffner	X	
Ms. Carmen Terrones	X	
Mr. Kenneth Tupy	X	

9 Members Present

0 Members Absent

The Board heard the case of Judah Watkins B84518, James Brimmer C61247, Everett Bowen C81522, Patricia Columbo C77200, and Eddie Pitts L01404.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL for 9-25-2025 & 12-18-2025 HLEMONS-JBOHLAND

Open Session: RSHOFFNER-JBOHLAND

Meeting was adjourned by: MCOATES-KTUPY



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EN BANC MINUTE SHEET
OPEN SESSION- March 26, 2026

Individual in Custody's Name: Watkins, Judah IDOC Number: B84518

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 26, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Judah Watkins B84518.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Ms. Buckley, Mr. Coates, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On December 2, 2025, and again on February 5, 2026, Mr. Judah Watkins IDOC #B84518 was interviewed at Robinson Correctional Center via Webex by Board Member Mr. Jeffrey Grubbs. Mr. Watkins is represented by his legal counsel, Ms. Karen Ranos, who was present for both interviews.

Throughout the interview, Mr. Watkins was attentive, articulate, polite, respectful and responsive. He presented himself as being very intelligent, invested in the process, and he was willing to answer questions. The initial interview process lasted over four hours in length and the second around one hour in length.

Mr. Watkins was originally sentenced in 2005 to an aggregate of 60 years of incarceration, including 50 years for the crime of Murder, as well as 15-year sentences for each of the following: crimes: Armed Robbery, Aggravated Battery with a Firearm, and Home Invasion. Records reflect he was resentenced in 2020, to an aggregate of 46 years, including 25 years for the crime of Murder, along with seven years each for the lesser included offenses. Mr. Watkins' Mandatory Supervised Release date is January 5, 2047. He will be 50 years old at that time, and he is currently 39 years old at the time of this hearing. He was approximately 17 years, six months of age at the time of the offense, meaning he has been incarcerated for approximately just over 22 years.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The official statement of facts is derived from Grand Jury documents charging Mr. Watkins with the offenses for which he would be convicted of following a jury trial. It contains only brief accounts of the description of the incident which led to the conviction of Mr. Watkins.

Records show that on or about May 26, 2004, Mr. Watkins and his two co-defendants entered the occupied home of Wes Edwards with the intent of committing a theft and/or robbery. Once inside, they



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became aware the home was occupied and ultimately the resident, Mr. Wesley Edwards, was shot in the leg and beaten about the head. Ms. Andrea Perdew was shot in the head and died from the gunshot wound.

Resentencing transcripts were obtained by the Board for review. Included in the transcript is an agreement by all parties ahead of the resentencing order that the minimum sentence available was an aggregate period of 38 years of incarceration.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Watkins' juvenile criminal history record information was discussed & evaluated by this Board in closed session.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Watkins' institutional adjustment has been remarkable, and the following information has been derived from his youthful parole petition, parole eligibility interview, behalf witnesses, and parole plan.

Mr. Watkins has only received three tickets over a twenty-two-year period of incarceration. While two of those occurred in 2023, there is only one ticket which led to significant inquiry, as it was classified as a major incident and led to 28 days of segregation and a disciplinary transfer from Menard Correctional Center to Lawrence Correctional Center. This incident involved synthetic cannabis located in his cell, which Mr. Watkins explained did not belong to him and that two others were also charged with possessing, in addition to himself. He declined to provide testimony to the inquiry for fear of retaliation if he cooperated.

Another area which led to significant inquiry is contained in the Offender Overview, which was prepared by his counselor at Lawrence Correctional Center and his involvement or affiliation with an organized street gang. Mr. Watkins denied any involvement and explained it was his cellmate at Menard Correctional Center who had gang involvement or affiliation.

During his period of incarceration, initially at Menard Correctional Center, Mr. Watkins was afforded limited opportunity to participate in rehabilitative efforts due to the length of his sentence. Despite this, he sought educational and employment opportunities which again, are very limited in availability to not only himself, but to similarly situated incarcerated individuals. His investment in those efforts increased as additional opportunities became available following his disciplinary transfer to Lawrence Correctional Center.

He began by obtaining his General Educational Development (GED) which led to employment in the barbershop, followed by his work in industries as a knitter and ultimately was promoted to a tailor in the knitting shop. The availability of programming opportunities increased with the recent introduction and availability of the EDOVO electronic training program system implemented by the Illinois Department of Corrections. The record reflects he has taken advantage of the available opportunities he eventually earned for growth and rehabilitation.



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Family support for Mr. Watkins is also documented in the letters of support and the testimony of family as well as current and one retired Illinois Department of Corrections employee who spoke on his behalf as a part of his parole eligibility interview. This included his aunt, who is the CEO of a small company in his home county of Pulaski. Her testimony regarding her support and pledge to assist with him if he is granted parole release was positive, credible and impactful and was a part of his original parole plan. Though the parole plan was recently modified, she still intends to lend all of the support her and her company can muster to ensure Mr. Watkins is able to have the best opportunity for a successful parole term and beyond.

Mr. Wendell Robinson, the Executive Director of Restore Justice and a formerly incarcerated individual himself, also spoke on Mr. Watkins' behalf. Mr. Robinson is a friend of Mr. Watkins, whom he met during his period of incarceration. He pledged his support and the resources of the company he leads, and was found to be as credible, impactful and supportive as he always has been found to be in assisting incarcerated individuals who are seeking or have been granted parole release.

Ms. Dylan Marshall is an Illinois Department of Corrections employee and supervisor in the law library who provided testimony regarding positive interactions with Mr. Watkins, who utilized the library to conduct legal research for the last three years. Ms. Marshall's testimony was also very passionate and impactful regarding Mr. Watkins' dedication, knowledge, and high moral standards

Mr. Terrance Jackson, a retired Illinois Department of Corrections officer with 27 years of experience, who met Mr. Watkins at Menard Correctional Center, also testified in not only Mr. Watkins' resentencing hearing, but as a part of his parole eligibility interview.

There were numerous other individuals present to witness and show support for Mr. Watkins during his parole eligibility interview. It was obvious he has garnered a significant amount of support during his period of incarceration, potential parole release and to assist in providing him a successful parole term.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Watkins, in his interview, relayed that on or about May 26, 2004, he and his two co-defendants, one of which was his cousin and the other a friend of the cousin, traveled to Massac County to the home of a known acquaintance with the intent of stealing marijuana. Once forced entry was made, it became obvious the home was occupied, but since it was nighttime and there were little to no lights on inside the home, it was nearly impossible to determine if there was anyone there other than the intended victim, Mr. Edwards, present inside the home. He further indicated that prior to him entering the home, three or so gunshots rang out from inside the home. At some point, just prior to or during an altercation with Mr. Edwards, a gun was handed to Mr. Watkins, and he was told to shoot Mr. Edwards after the struggle ensued. He did so, with the bullet striking Mr. Edwards in the leg. Ultimately, they fled the scene and later learned a bullet had struck and killed Ms. Andrea Perdew.

He ultimately returned to an uncle's home in Pulaski County, which is the county where he resided. When the police investigation progressed to the point he was brought in for questioning, he lied,



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claiming he had an alibi. This continued until it was divulged to him that one of his co-defendants had implicated him as the shooter.

According to his interview, he had been offered a plea agreement of 28-30 years in exchange for a plea of guilt. His two co-defendants received negotiated sentences of 25 years each, at 100%. He chose to go to trial and was convicted, sentenced and ultimately re-sentenced.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Watkins' parole plan has been recently modified to include housing and direct assistance with all phases of re-entry from his sister, who lives in Marion, Illinois. Though this is a small to medium sized area encompassing a large, rural region, there are several proposed factories for him to seek employment. Mr. Watkins' preferred goal is to join the local labor union initially as an apprentice. All proposed employers and the laborer's hall and training facility are in close proximity to her residence. Though she did not provide testimony during his parole eligibility interview, she did provide a letter of support on Mr. Watkins' behalf included in the Board's file. The letter was well-written, thorough, and though concise, it was complete.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Massac County State's Attorney, nor anyone else has submitted a letter or provided testimony regarding a position related to Mr. Watkins' petition for parole release.

ENBANC HISTORY

As this is a Youthful Parole release, this is Mr. Watkins' first parole release petition to be considered by this Board.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Ann Disroe, project coordinator for Legacy Insignia Training, was present with Ms. Karen Ranos, Mr. Watkins' attorney. She shared a letter with the Board that discusses all the resources he will have available to him if he is released.

Mr. Wendell Robinson, Executive Director of Restore Justice, shared his experience when meeting Mr. Watkins and expressed the importance of having support and the Board being able to see that. He then shared stories from other individuals who have been released and are doing great things. He shared a story with the Board about visiting other nonprofits in southern Illinois and stated he would like to expand his program. He stated they have an apprentice position he believes Mr. Watkins would be great at it because his energy is contagious. He stated Restore Justice will do whatever they need to support him, and he will be an excellent addition to his nonprofit.

Mr. Heaton questioned when Mr. Watkins was accepted into the Insignia Program. Ms. Disroe stated he was accepted back in December of 2025, and she explained the application process.



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Mr. Heaton then questioned how long it had been a place. Ms. Disroe stated year and a half. She then shared there are eight other people in the program that live in the home and once a month they go to developmental programs for work force.

Ms. Terrones stated how important it is for him to receive clinical support and therapy.

Mr. Bohland questioned whether the co-defendant received 25 years and if they have been released. Mr. Grubbs stated it was 25 years at 100% but he is not sure when that process started. Ms. Disroe stated that to her knowledge that individual is still incarcerated.

Mr. Watkins started off thanking the Board for their time. He stated he understands the process when it comes to considering his release and he shared his experience about being incarcerated for the last 22 years. He stated he was able to surround himself with others who held him responsible for his crimes, which gave him the ability to thrive and look inside himself. He stated he has done a lot of work to strive and become the person he is today. He shared after all of the pain he has caused; he never wants someone to have to live with that again. He stated after many years of trying to become who he is, he was told by a prosecutor that it did not matter. He stated he did not agree because it matters to him, his family and his supporters. He stated he understands there is a community that he owes a debt too as well.

Ms. Shoffner stated she respects and appreciates him taking accountability and responsibility.

Mr. Heaton questioned how many times he fired the gun and if he is directly responsible for shooting the female victim. Mr. Watkins stated there were shots fired by his co-defendant. He stated he fired two shots in a dark room, but he does not believe his weapon directly killed her, but he takes responsibility for it.

Mr. Heaton questioned whether he was charged with her murder and what has changed since his resentencing hearing to now. Ms. Ranos stated programming, but he was not allowed to take college courses.

Mr. Coates stated several correctional officers testified on behalf of Mr. Watkins as he read through the court transcripts.

End of Discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (JGRUBBS-KTUPY). Motion prevailed with a 7-2 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Bohland, Ms. Buckley, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner and Mr. Tupy. Mr. Coates and Ms. Terrones dissented.

After reviewing the 15 Statutory Factors and applying them to the evidence in this case, the Board decided that Mr. Judah Watkins should be denied parole.



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“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.”

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET
OPEN SESSION- March 26, 2026

Individual in Custody's Name: Brimmer, James* IDOC Number: C61247

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 26, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for James Brimmer C61247.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Ms. Buckley, Mr. Coates, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On January 22, 2026, Board Member Ms. Robin Shoffner interviewed Mr. James Brimmer C61247 for approximately 50 minutes via Webex from Pontiac Correctional Center. Mr. Zachery Bass, his son, was also present and testified in support of his father's release. At the time of the interview, both Mr. Brimmer and Ms. Shoffner were mistakenly under the belief that his Mandatory Supervised Release date was July 17, 2027. Mr. Brimmer was subsequently advised that his Mandatory Supervised Release is November 4, 2065.

Mr. Brimmer is 70 years old and is serving a term of 100 to 200 years for each of the following convictions: the murder of Joyce Britt, and the attempted murder and rape of Ms. Britt's then 16-year-old daughter. He has been incarcerated for approximately 52 years.

He spoke at length about his failing health, stating that he has a small cell lung cancer, which is now in remission. He also stated that he has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and that he can barely breathe. In addition, he indicated that he receives infusions every five to six weeks for bowels that are related to an abdominal aneurism.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Records reflect that on November 25, 1974, Chicago police officers responded to a 911 call of a girl being shot. When they arrived, the officers saw an injured 16-year-old girl, the daughter screaming, "They killed my mother!" The officers proceeded to the second-floor apartment and saw that it had been ransacked. They also saw the body of her mother, 35-year-old Ms. Joyce Britt, who they observed had several gunshot wounds to her head and body. She was transported to St. Mary's Hospital, where she was pronounced dead upon arrival. Ms. Britt's daughter was also transported to that hospital for treatment of five gunshot wounds.



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The daughter told police that she knew two of the offenders, Mr. Ricardo Norals and Mr. James Brimmer and was able to identify them. When she returned home at approximately 1:30 p.m., she knocked on her apartment door, co-defendant Mr. Norals, known to her as "Carl" eventually opened the door. When she entered, she observed that the apartment appeared "all messed up." At this point, her mother, Ms. Britt came running out of the bedroom. She was naked and pursued by Mr. Brimmer, known to her as "James" and a third offender. Mr. Brimmer was brandishing a pistol. The third offender made the daughter remove her coat and forced her into a bedroom. There, she struggled with him, while he began beating and choking her. She finally relented after her mother told her to "do as they say."

She stated that Mr. Brimmer was in the bedroom as the third offender pushed her down on the bed and raped her. She did not remember how long he sexually assaulted her, but stated that when the third offender was done, Mr. Brimmer then raped her for about ten minutes. Then, Mr. Norals entered the room, handed his gun to Mr. Brimmer, and Mr. Norals then also raped her.

After being raped by all three men, she was allowed to go to the bathroom where she noticed that her face was severely injured from being beaten by the men. Upon returning, she saw her mother crying and bleeding from her head. When she sat next to her mother, Mr. Norals asked the two women if they had any money. Informing him that she had a check in her purse, she gave the check to Mr. Brimmer, telling him that it was all the money she had. Mr. Norals then ordered the mother to go into a bedroom with him. Soon thereafter, the daughter heard several gunshots coming from the bedroom where Mr. Norals had taken her mother.

Mr. Norals summoned Mr. Brimmer into that bedroom, and the third offender remained with the daughter holding her at gunpoint. Then, the daughter heard another gunshot. Mr. Norals and Mr. Brimmer returned to the living room. The daughter slid off the chair she was sitting on, onto the floor, and Mr. Norals instructed the third offender to "get her." After struggling with him, the daughter was shot two times in the legs, then shot in the neck. She slumped to the floor and pretended she was dead. The three men fled. She remained on the floor for about five minutes and then saw her mother. She began screaming and made her way to a neighbor who called the police.

The daughter was able to inform the police of the names of Mr. James Brimmer and Mr. Ricardo Norals, and the area where they were known to hang out. She identified them both in photographs. Mr. Norals was arrested the following day at his home. Mr. Brimmer was arrested about five weeks after because he had been arrested and charged with battery in an unrelated case on January 2, 1975. At the time of his arrest, he gave a false name, Mr. Holis Hall, which was his grandfather's name. However, fingerprint comparisons revealed that he was in fact James Brimmer and that an arrest warrant for murder was outstanding from the rape/murder incident.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. James Brimmer had no other criminal history beyond the offenses of conviction and the arrest for battery described above.



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INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Brimmer had an extensive disciplinary history within Illinois Department of Corrections over his 48 years of custody. Specifically, he had more than 350 institutional infractions, although only three tickets since 2017. His last ticket in 2023 was for theft. During the course of his incarceration, Mr. Brimmer committed staff assaults in 1980 and 1993 and has been placed in segregation 31 times. Mr. James Brimmer's possession of a homemade shank in 2009, at the age of 52, resulted in a disciplinary transfer from Hill Correctional Center, a medium security, to Pontiac Correctional Center which is maximum security. Eight years after that transfer, at the age of 60, he received six months in segregation for assaulting another individual in custody, by striking the individual in custody in the head and face.

He was classified as high, maximum security and moderate escape risk as recently as February 19, 2021, but is currently classified as minimum security/no escape risk. He is currently in Protective Custody Group 2 status and has held a job in the kitchen since June 24, 2020.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

During the interview, Mr. Brimmer denied that he had anything to do with these crimes and stated that he did not know anything about it. He also stated that he did not know the victim and further, that he was at the movies at the time this incident happened. Although he has been known to make inconsistent statements over the years, Mr. Brimmer has maintained his innocence since the time of his arrest. He stated that he is a better person than he was at 18 years of age. He also stated that he was comforted after receiving a letter from Katie Heath, acknowledging that she believed he is a different person from the 18-year-old person who committed these crimes.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Brimmer stated he would probably live on his own or with his son, Mr. Zachary Bass, if released on parole. Mr. Bass stated that he does not believe his father committed this crime. He stated that he will help his father find a job and an apartment. Mr. Bass and his brother James have a towing business, in which Mr. James Brimmer could work assisting with work on the truck and repairs.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Any victim statements provided to the Board were discussed in closed session.

ENBANC HISTORY

Mr. James Brimmer has been denied parole on 23 prior occasions and has never received a vote from a Prisoner Review Board member in support of him being released.

Closed Executive Session: JBOHLAND-TBUCKLEY



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Open Executive Session: RHEATON-HLEMONS

DISCUSSION

Mr. Brimmer stated he has said everything he needs to say to the Board and in court. He stated he is a different person, and he has put his life in God's hands. He stated he was a kid when he first got his sentence, and he explained the health issues he is currently facing. He asked the Board for another chance, and stating he would never commit another crime. He stated he could never hurt another female; he had a mother, aunt, and grandma. He stated he was raised by females therefore he would never do that to a woman. He stated he is just asking the Board for a chance because he does not know how long he has left on this earth.

Ms. Courtney Quam, Cook County Assistant States Attorney, opposes the granting of parole in this case. She stated he has made several inconsistent accounts of what happened, and he has never shown any type of remorse. She stated he was identified by the surviving victim because she knew him. She stated that parole is not deserved when he does not take accountability. She stated he would have a life sentence if he had committed this crime today and she asks the Board to deny parole.

Ms. Nichole Bartell, Assistant Attorney General, stated if he were to be granted parole, they would request a 90-day stay for Sexually Violent Persons Act.

Mr. Coates stated he conducted the protest hearing about this case and stated one of the victim's parents was a friend of his from high school and he has recused himself from voting.

Mr. Brimmer stated he is just trying to prove he is innocent with new evidence. He asked God to shine the light on him this time.

End of Discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (RSHOFFNER-HLEMONS). Motion prevailed with an 8-0 vote. Mr. Coates abstained from voting.

Motion for a 3-year set (KTUPY-TBUCKLEY). Motion prevailed by an 8-0 vote. Mr. Coates abstained from voting.

After reviewing the 15 Statutory Factors and applying them to the evidence in this case, the Board decided that Mr. James Brimmer should be denied parole.

"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- March 26, 2026

Individual in Custody's Name: Bowen, Everett* IDOC Number: C81522

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 26, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Everett Bowen C81522.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Ms. Buckley, Mr. Coates, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On February 10, 2025, Mr. Everett Bowen C81522 was interviewed at East Moline Correctional Center via Webex by Board Member Jeffrey Grubbs. Mr. Bowen is not represented by legal counsel.

Mr. Bowen presented himself, was well groomed, and while he was polite, he presented himself in a bitter manner regarding the length of his incarceration and his belief he would never be granted parole release.

Mr. Bowen's Mandatory Supervised Release date is September 28, 2051. He will be 108 years old, and he is 83 years old at the time of this hearing.

Mr. Bowen was convicted of three counts of murder and one count of arson and sentenced on May 3, 1978, to serve 100-150 years for the murders and 100-150 years for arson, which was later reduced to one-20 years. Mr. Bowen's conviction and sentences were affirmed on direct appeal.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The statement of facts was derived from the official statement provided by the Cook County State's Attorney Office, whose most recent account is dated March 19, 2026.

Records reflect a fire occurred on July 2, 1977, at 4:30 a.m. at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Booth. Mrs. Evelyn Bowen, Mr. Bowen's spouse, and their four children were living in the Booth household at the time. William Booth is Mrs. Bowen's brother. Three of the children perished in the fire. Mrs. Bowen and another son escaped. The Booth family was away in Wisconsin.

Mrs. Bowen testified that she had contacted an attorney in May 1977 for the purpose of obtaining a divorce from 34-year-old Everett Bowen. Mrs. Bowen indicated that Mr. Bowen pleaded with her not to do it. On May 29, 1977, Mrs. Bowen stated that Mr. Bowen tried to drag her to bed. She struck him with a book, freed herself and ran. Mr. Bowen stated, "if you divorce me, I'll kill you." Mrs. Bowen indicated that on May 31, 1977, she and Mr. Bowen argued about some insurance papers in the possession



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of a friend of Mrs. Bowen. Mr. Bowen ran into the bedroom and began to kick a cedar chest that Mrs. Bowen's father had given her. He cursed at Mrs. Bowen, and she screamed at him, and he backed off. The following day, Mrs. Bowen moved the cedar chest and some items to a friend's home and to the Booth household. When Mr. Bowen returned home that day, he placed a heavy chain around Mrs. Bowen's neck and yelled, "Where's my stuff?" Mr. Bowen's oldest daughter began screaming and he released his wife. Mrs. Bowen and the children moved to the Booth household that day. On June 7, 1977, Mrs. Bowen signed a complaint for battery against Mr. Bowen. On June 17, 1977, Mrs. Marianne Booth answered the telephone and Mr. Bowen stated, "You're two dead motherf*ckers." Mr. Bowen called again on June 22, 1977, and stated, "I'll burn down the house around you two whoring motherf*ckers and I'll get my kids out."

On June 25, 1977, Mrs. Bowen and Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Bowen's sister-in-law, noticed the youngest Bowen child, Mark, was missing. Mrs. Bowen drove Mrs. Booth's car over to Mr. Bowen's house to retrieve Mark. Mr. Bowen indicated that Mark was not there, and Mrs. Bowen went to a neighbor's house to call Mrs. Booth to ask her to call the Cook County Sheriff. Mrs. Bowen returned to Mr. Bowen's house, blocking his driveway and car. Mr. Bowen backed up against the car, denting it, then returned into the house. Mrs. Booth arrived in another car. Mr. Bowen came out of the house with Mark and demanded that Mrs. Booth get off his property. Mark got into the car with his mother, and Mrs. Bowen drove off when Mr. Bowen began pounding his fists on the car window. Mrs. Booth returned home and called the police. She and Mrs. Bowen returned to Mr. Bowen's house to fill out the accident report with two policemen. As Mrs. Booth and Mrs. Bowen drove away, Officer James Coakley heard Mr. Bowen state, "I will get her, and the God damn kids too." After the fire, Officer Coakley advised Detective Peters as to what he heard Mr. Bowen state that night.

On June 27, 1977, Mr. Bowen called Mrs. Bowen and stated, "I'm through. I've had enough. If you or the kids try to contact me in any way, I'll have you killed." On July 1, 1977, Mrs. Bowen went to court and obtained a temporary restraining order to keep Mr. Bowen from having the children that weekend. He drove to the Booth house later that afternoon to see Mrs. Bowen regarding some insurance papers. Mrs. Bowen refused to help him fill out the papers and Mr. Bowen became angry. Mrs. Bowen ran inside, and Mr. Bowen broke open the front door. Mrs. Bowen called Northlake police when Mr. Bowen left. Ms. Rebecca Gilliland, the sister of Mr. Bowen's friend, said that she talked with Mr. Bowen on the evening of July 1, 1977. She stated that Mr. Bowen had been drinking. He began a conversation about his wife and accused his wife of going out with other men. He became angry as he talked. Mr. Bowen asked Rebecca if she knew Mrs. Bowen and whether she was aware they were divorcing. He told Rebecca that "if [he] couldn't have the kids, that she would not get the little son of bitches either; that he'd just burn them up."

At 4:30 a.m. on July 2, 1977, Mrs. Bowen woke up and smelled smoke. She got up and saw that the house was on fire. Mrs. Bowen ran to get the children out of the house, but the stairway was blocked by the fire. Her son Robert, age 10, fell down the stairs and was able to escape outside with his mother. Mrs. Bowen could hear her three other children trapped upstairs screaming, "Mommy, please help me" but she was unable to save her other children. The fire department arrived and removed the bodies of Mark Bowen, age 5, Julie Bowen, age 8, and Sherry Bowen, age 13, from an upstairs bedroom. All three children died of smoke inhalation.



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Chief Julius Sharpy of the Northlake Fire Department determined that the fire originated in the front bedroom on the first floor of the Booth house. No trace or odor of liquid accelerants was discovered, and it was Chief Sharpy's opinion that the fire had been burning for approximately 45 minutes when the call came in at 4:30 a.m. Mr. Bowen was observed at the scene of the fire at 8:15 a.m. He asked where the children were and was told that his children had died in the fire. He responded, "You're kidding me." Northlake Police Officer Thomas O'Cull asked Mr. Bowen to go to the Northlake police station to speak with detectives there, but Mr. Bowen was not told that he was under arrest, nor was he handcuffed or searched. He agreed to go and was transported to the station in a squad car. Sergeant Gilliam gave him Miranda warnings. Mr. Bowen stated that he understood his rights and signed a waiver of rights form. When asked about his activities the previous evening, Mr. Bowen stated that he went to his brother-in-law's house to talk with his wife concerning insurance matters but did not go into the house. He kicked in the front door of the house, left, and went back to his house. After leaving his house, he spent the evening drinking at a tavern until 3:00 a.m. and then returned home. Assistant State's Attorney Patrick O'Brien arrived at the station to talk with Mr. Bowen and again advised him of his Miranda rights. Mr. Bowen indicated he understood and denied starting the fire. He volunteered to take a polygraph test, but there was no technician on duty to administer the test. He was then taken to Cook County morgue to make a positive identification of the children, whereupon he broke down and cried for a short period when the last of his children had been identified.

After obtaining Mr. Bowen's consent to search his apartment, Detective Peters and Assistant State's Attorney (ASA) O'Brien talked with his upstairs neighbor, Cynthia Duda Benson, and she told them that she heard Mr. Bowen's van leave early in the morning of July 2, 1977. When ASA O'Brien returned to the station, Mr. Bowen was speaking with his minister. After the minister left, Mr. Bowen was again questioned but denied moving his van on the morning in question. ASA O'Brien determined there was insufficient evidence to hold Mr. Bowen, but he was asked to return to the station the next morning to take the polygraph test. The following morning, Mr. Bowen accompanied Sgt. Gilliam and Detective Peters to Joliet for the test. He was not questioned on the way to Joliet. Prior to the test, he was asked by Technician Dennis Loporini if he understood his Miranda rights, whereupon Mr. Bowen indicated that he had previously taken a polygraph test in connection with his employment. Technician Loporini analyzed the results of the test and determined Mr. Bowen had not told the truth regarding the fire investigation. Subsequently, Mr. Bowen was confronted with the results of the test but denied that he had lied. Detective Peters questioned Mr. Bowen on the return trip from Joliet. Neither Sargent Gilliam nor Detective Peters yelled at, accused, or threatened Mr. Bowen.

Chief Lee Gehrke requested to speak with Mr. Bowen. He asked Mr. Bowen whether he had returned to the station voluntarily and Mr. Bowen indicated that he had. Chief Gehrke informed Mr. Bowen that his Miranda rights were still in effect and that Mr. Bowen could leave the station at any time. Mr. Bowen indicated that he understood. Chief Gehrke went over Mr. Bowen's version of what had transpired the evening of July 1, 1977, and the early morning of July 2, 1977. Mr. Bowen twice denied setting the fire. Chief Gehrke then said to him, "Everett, if you had anything to do with that fire now is the time to make peace with yourself, your God and your children." Chief Gehrke stated that Mr. Bowen started to cry and said, "I can't stand it any longer. I started the fire." Mr. Bowen indicated that when he left the tavern in Northlake, he walked to the Booth house, went to the side window, took out a cigarette lighter and lit the curtains or drapes. He closed the window, walked back to his van and returned home, remaining there until he received a telephone call from a friend telling him about the fire. Chief Gehrke



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learned from Mr. Bowen that the cigarette lighter he had been using to light his cigarettes was the one used to start the fire. Chief Gehrke confiscated the lighter as evidence and told Detective Peters to notify the State's Attorney's office.

Mr. Bowen spoke with his minister after his statement was obtained. Until the time his statement was obtained, Mr. Bowen was not under arrest, and no charges had been filed against him. ASA Mark Tobias took Mr. Bowen's written statement, again advising him of his Miranda rights. After the statement was transcribed, ASA Tobias read the contents of the statement to Mr. Bowen. Mr. Bowen initialed each page of the statement. The next morning, Mr. Bowen requested to be taken to the Northlake Funeral Home. As Mr. Bowen left the funeral home, he remarked, "God knows I didn't want to do it, but Evelyn made me." Later that day, ASA Colin Simpson read part of Mr. Bowen's confession to him wherein he admitted starting the fire, and asked Mr. Bowen whether that was the statement he had made to ASA Tobias. Sgt. Gilliam testified that Mr. Bowen told ASA Simpson that he had confessed "Because it's true, I did it."

The Reverend Fred Moore, Mr. Bowen's minister, testified that when he saw Mr. Bowen on July 2, 1977, at the police station, Mr. Bowen was trembling, and his hands were clammy. Mr. Bowen stated several times "I didn't do it" and gave Reverend Moore his version of the previous evening's activities. Reverend Moore asked Mr. Bowen whether he had set the fire, and Mr. Bowen denied it. Reverend Moore next saw Mr. Bowen the evening of July 3, 1977. Mr. Bowen was once again trembling, and his hands were clammy. Reverend Moore asked him whether he had set the fire and Mr. Bowen replied, "Well, they said I did." Reverend Moore asked Mr. Bowen about the signed confession, and he responded, "Well, they told me that I did it." Mr. Bowen admitted to Reverend Moore that he used the lighter to see into the dark room. When the lighter struck the curtain, he withdrew his hand and fled. He did not ascertain whether the curtain ignited. Mr. Bowen testified at trial that he did not start the fire. He stated that when he left the tavern at 3:00 a.m., he went to the store for some ice cream and then went home to bed. Mr. Bowen further testified that Chief Lee Gehrke stopped him from leaving the station on Sunday, July 3, 1977.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Everett Bowen was convicted of Assault and Battery of Mrs. Bowen in Pikesville, Maryland in 1973 and was ordered to pay a \$40 fine.

He was arrested for Battery in Cook County June 17, 1977, that was later dismissed.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

At the time of his most recent parole hearing in 2023, Mr. Everett Bowen had been found guilty of just five disciplinary tickets throughout the entirety of his incarceration, though all were major level offenses. Three of the five disciplinary tickets were for contraband in 2000, 2001, and 2006.

His fourth ticket was for insolence in the form of profanity in 2008 and the fifth ticket was for contraband in 2014 where he had a hot pot with the Illinois Department of Corrections number defaced.



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Following his 2023 parole hearing, he received three tickets, all for which he was found guilty, though they are classified as minor. The first in 2023 and another in 2024 were for Insolence. His most recent ticket occurred on May 1, 2025, and it was for unauthorized movement.

The only visits Mr. Everett Bowen has ever received are from his legal counsel and they were prior to his 2023 parole hearing.

Mr. Bowen is in fair health and takes medication for a few medically diagnosed ailments, common for someone his age. He does rely on the use of a cane, but he is ambulatory.

Mr. Bowen had not requested participation in educational, clinical, vocational, or self-improvement programming prior to his 2023 parole hearing. Since then, he indicated he completed an Anger Management program in 2025. He indicated he has not expressed any interest in acquiring an institutional job assignment since transferring to East Moline Correctional Center from Illinois River Correctional Center in September 2018 and has no further interest in educational or vocational programming.

Mr. Bowen is classified as minimum security, with no escape risk, and has maintained an A grade classification since 2008, absent some short-term downgrades to B grade due to disciplinary infractions.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Though Mr. Bowen has historically maintained an actual claim of innocence, in his interview he indicated the following. At the beginning of the interview, he indicated the incident was all in his past and there was nothing he could do about it. Eventually, he admitted that he “took all the credit for it,” referring to his initial admission, which is a departure from the historical record before this Board. When asked why he did it, he indicated, “because I was drunk,” which he had previously indicated. Upon further questioning, he went on to state, “I am sorry in every way,” but when asked if he could go back in time and change things he stated, “I do not worry about that any longer.” At this point he indicated he had no further statements to relay to the Board regarding the offense, except that he believes he has served his time and should be released based upon the excessive length of his incarceration.

PAROLE PLANS

There is not a formal parole plan, but Mr. Bowen indicated a desire to reside with his brother in Maryland (Offender Overview indicates Massachusetts). Mr. Bowen’s brother ended communications with Mr. Bowen by blocking his telephone calls some time ago and he had no alternative means of contacting him, rendering this as an unviable option. As an alternative, he indicated he would consider residing with a formerly incarcerated person he is acquainted with who lives in Urbana, Illinois. He had no other options or information regarding this person. He would rely upon social security for income.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office filed a formal letter of objection.

Any victim statements provided to the Board were reviewed and considered thoroughly.



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ENBANC HISTORY

Mr. Bowen first became eligible for parole consideration in 1986. He has been presented for parole consideration twenty-four times prior to today. He has never received a vote in favor of granting parole release. He has received a total of five 3-year sets, and one 5-year set, beginning 2003.

Closed Executive Session: JBOHLAND-TBUCKLEY

Open Executive Session: RHEATON-HLEMONS

DISCUSSION

Mr. Grubbs asked Mr. Bowen if he had a statement he would like to share with the Board today. Mr. Bowen stated he is not much of a speaker and would like to rely on the Board.

Ms. Courtney Quam, Cook County's Assistant State's Attorney, stated they oppose the granting of parole. She stated he fails to present remorse or insight on what happened and he does not have a parole plan either. She stated in 2023, he stated his wife was responsible and not him.

Ms. Nichole Bartell, Assistant Attorney General, stated they ask for a 90 day stay under Sexually Violent Persons Act.

Mr. Bowen stated he accepts whatever the Board wants, and he is tired.

End of Discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (JGRUBBS-HLEMONS). Motion prevailed by a unanimous vote.

Motion for a 3-year set (JGRUBBS-TBUCKLEY). Motion prevailed by a unanimous vote.

After reviewing the 15 Statutory Factors and applying them to the evidence in this case, the Board decided that Mr. Everett Bowen should be denied parole.

"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- March 26, 2026

Individual in Custody's Name: Columbo, Patricia* IDOC Number: C77200

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 26, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Patricia Columbo C77200.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Ms. Buckley, Mr. Coates, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Ms. Patricia Columbo #C77200 was interviewed via Webex from Logan Correctional Center on February 19th, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. by Board Member Jared Bohland. Ms. Columbo was represented by Attorney Ms. Rachel Domain-White. Ms. Columbo was well kept, appeared healthy, and communicated without issue. Mr. Bohland found Ms. Columbo to be very respectful and even appreciative of the interview. Despite the obvious weight of the discussion, she was very forthcoming and open to any questions that the board member presented. Mr. Bohland was impressed with Ms. Columbo's willingness to have deep and direct conversations about even the most difficult facts of the case.

Ms. Columbo was joined by five testifying witnesses including Mr. Jack Donson of the Federal Prison Education and Reform Alliance who conducted a risk assessment, Ms. Becky Funk who volunteered in Illinois Department of Corrections chaplaincy and administered Christian healing counseling services, Mr. David Harris of St. Leonard's Ministries along with his colleague, Ms. Anna Cruz as director of the Grace House program, and Mr. Deon Griggs who serves as the Illinois Prison Project Domestic Violence Advocate.

Ms. Columbo's holding offenses include 1976 convictions for three counts of murder with a 200-to-300-year sentence along with one count of solicitation with a 20-to-50-year sentence, all out of Cook County. Her Mandatory Supervised Release date is January 4th, 2115, with a maximum discharge date of January 1, 2118. Ms. Columbo was 19 years old at the time of the offense. She is currently 69 years old and has been in Illinois Department of Corrections custody for 49 years.

In a brief opening statement, Ms. Columbo stated that nobody can speak worse about herself than she can. She is grateful for the support and kind words from her support network but admits that it is hard for her to hear positive feedback.



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STATEMENT OF FACTS

Records reflect that on May 7, 1976, the bodies of Frank Columbo, age 52, his wife, Mary Columbo, age 50, and Michael Columbo, their son, age 13, were discovered in their home in Elk Grove Village. At the time the bodies were discovered, they had been dead for several days and had been brutally stabbed and beaten.

In the week following the discovery of the murders, an intensive investigation had begun by members of the Elk Grove Police Department and the Cook County Sheriff's Office. On May 15, 1976, Patricia Columbo was arrested and charged with Conspiracy, Solicitation, and three counts of Murder. On the date of her arrest, she gave an oral and written statement to the police admitting her guilt in soliciting two men to murder her family but claiming she knew nothing about the actual murders.

The evidence at trial revealed that when she was sixteen years old, she began a relationship with her later co-offender Frank DeLuca who was at the time a 37-year-old married man with five children. Mr. DeLuca worked as the manager of a Walgreens Drug Store and Patricia was an employee at the same store. When she was 17 years old, she moved out of her family home and began living with Mr. DeLuca, who had left his wife and children. Their relationship caused a considerable amount of friction between Patricia and her parents and led to a confrontation between DeLuca and her father in the summer of 1975. The confrontation turned into a physical fight and Mr. DeLuca got several of his teeth knocked out by Frank Columbo. After this incident the gap between Patricia and her family widened, she was written out of her parent's will in favor of her younger brother. Patricia expressed to other people her deep-seeded hatred for her parents and even her younger brother Michael.

In October of 1975, she met Mr. Roman Sobczynski and Mr. Lannie Mitchell and began to talk to them about wanting to have her family killed because they were "hassling" her and Frank. She agreed with these two men, in return for her providing them with all kinds of sexual favors, to have her entire family killed. She wanted it done near a holiday as a "present" for them. She provided them with pictures of her mother, father, and brother, a dossier detailing their day-to-day activities, and diagrams of the Columbo home. She and Mr. DeLuca were continually prodding the two men to do the killings, but when it became apparent after a period of time that Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Sobczynski had no intention of doing the job and were simply stringing Patricia Columbo along to obtain sex from her, they decided to commit the murders themselves.

On May 4^t, 1976, Ms. Columbo and Mr. DeLuca, dressed in dark clothes and armed with a gun, sometime after 11 p.m., went over to the Columbo home and massacred the entire family. Mr. Columbo was stabbed, shot numerous times and beaten with a heavy crystal lamp. Mrs. Columbo was shot between the eyes and had her throat slashed. Michael Columbo was shot through the head at close range, beaten with a heavy trophy and stabbed with a pair of scissors over ninety times. After they killed the family, Ms. Columbo and Mr. DeLuca messed the house up to make it look like a home invasion robbery had occurred, then left the house in the two family cars, and then dumped the cars in separate areas to delay the finding of the bodies. They also burned their bloody clothes and got rid of the gun.

On May 7, 1976, the bodies of Mr. Columbo, his wife, and Michael Columbo, their 13- year-old son, were discovered in their home at 55 Brentwood in Elk Grove Village. At the time, the bodies were



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discovered, the victims had been dead for several days and brutally stabbed and beaten. According to the police investigation, the process of the murders was as follows: when Mr. Columbo opened the door and turned around, Mr. DeLuca entered and shot Mr. Columbo with a .32 caliber handgun. As he tried to escape by running up the living room stairs, Patricia Columbo bludgeoned her father with a bowling trophy. Her mother, who was crouched in the bathroom with fear, was shot between the eyes, after which one of the attackers slit her throat. The medical examiner stated that Mrs. Columbo was probably dead before she hit the floor. The last victim was Michael, Patricia's 13-year-old brother, who slept through the initial gunshots. It is the belief of the detectives that both Patricia Columbo and Mr. DeLuca woke Michael up, stood him upright half-asleep, and shot him in his bedroom. Patricia then stabbed Michael 97 times with her mother's sewing scissors. When the police found Michael's body, they said at first glance it looked as if Michael had a case of the measles, until they realized that the "measles" were dozens of tiny red gashes.

The discovery of the bodies happened when an Elk Grove Village police officer showed up to inform Mr. Columbo that one of the family cars had been found on the city's west side. The officer noticed the front door ajar and undelivered newspapers piled up on the front step of the otherwise immaculately landscaped home; the patrolman pushed open the door and saw Mr. Columbo's body sprawled across the living room stairs, with a piece of the bowling trophy sticking out of his gashed skull and immediately radioed for backup.

When the officers entered the Columbo home, they discovered a bloody scene and the slain bodies of the Columbo's. Mr. Columbo was found lying on his back, in the living room, surrounded by broken glass. Dr. Robert Stein performed the autopsy on each victim. Mr. Columbo had multiple gunshot wounds to his head, traumatic lacerations to his scalp, and postmortem autolysis. Mrs. Columbo died of a gunshot wound to the head. Michael Columbo died of a bullet wound to the head and had 97 puncture and stab wounds to the neck and chest.

Crime scene photos on file serve to verify how extremely violent and heinous this series of murders really was. While each individual was shot, all three were also bludgeoned in severe fashion with different bludgeons from around the home, and all three were stabbed or slashed in a very passionate fashion. The father's face is completely crushed by the bludgeon. The mother's throat was slit literally from ear to ear. The brother was bludgeoned with a trophy as tall as his torso after being shot and stabbed 97 times after death to the point that his stab wounds did not bleed. Varying pieces of evidence were moved including the bodies as part of the staging by the offenders, and one crime scene photo indicates that Patricia Columbo took a set of keys for a family vehicle out of the mother's purse which was emptied on the floor because she had lost the keys she was using herself, which were ultimately found on the floor next to her brother's body.

For the next eight days, Patricia Columbo and Mr. DeLuca roamed free; Mr. DeLuca would not be arrested for the murders until that July. Mr. DeLuca was arrested and charged on July 17, 1977. He made statements admitting both his and Patricia's involvement in the conspiracy, solicitation and murders. While in the Cook County Jail, he made further admissions to a cell mate and solicited the same inmate to murder two of the witnesses who were going to testify against him and Patricia.



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Ms. Columbo was ultimately found guilty on August 8, 1977, for three counts of murder, solicitation for murder, and conspiracy for murder. She was sentenced to 200 – 300 years for the murders, 20 to 50 years for solicitation, and the conspiracy conviction was merged with the murder convictions and sentences.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Ms. Columbo's criminal history was committed as a youth and was discussed in executive session.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Ms. Columbo has taken part in significant amounts of programming and services over her incarceration. Most significantly is her involvement in Christian counseling which started in the 1990's and eventually grew to include involvement and even volunteer leadership in developing chaplaincy services. This is supported by testimony from Ms. Becky Funk, who started a prison ministry in 2006 and has been working with Ms. Columbo since 2008. She initially started by providing counseling but worked together overtime in chaplaincy, helped to start a chapel service at Logan Correctional Center, and coordinated ministry operations within the prison. Ms. Funk's church is ready to offer support including a year of housing and potential assistance with a vehicle. She testified that she has witnessed Ms. Columbo live out a life consistent with her faith, and she believes Ms. Columbo to be born again and wholly changed.

Ms. Columbo has maintained a remarkable disciplinary record particularly since 2000. Prior to that time, after reviewing the master file, there are a handful of pages where the tickets mostly amount to minor contraband issues, some unauthorized movement, and an incident involving a quart of beer being trafficked in. The only tickets of concern involved a 1997 Dangerous Contraband ticket where a plastic knife with razor blades attached was discovered and a 1999 Intimidation/Threats ticket. Since 2000, she has accrued a major contraband ticket in 2004 and a minor unauthorized movement ticket in 2006, with no tickets to follow in the last 20 years. Given historical arguments about a prostitution ring, Mr. Bohland also scoured the master file, and it should be noted that zero mention of anything related to a prostitution ring could be found in the entire file. Regardless of theories about information being removed from records, it is worth noting that Ms. Columbo has nothing on record that should be held against her at this time.

Ms. Columbo pursued education during her time and completed her General Educational Development (GED) in county jail in 1976, a secretarial sciences degree in the 1980's, and then an applied science degree, an associate of arts, and a bachelor's degree by the early 1990's.

She has held several job assignments particularly since 2010 including three years as a special needs worker, ten years as a housing specialist, two years as a chaplaincy specialist, two years as a janitor, four months as a paint shop laborer, and was a clinical services clerk in 2025.

Ms. Columbo was classified on August 7, 2025, as Grade A, medium security with zero escape risk. Mr. Jack Donson of the Federal Prison Education and Reform Alliance performed a Pattern Risk



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Assessment on Ms. Columbo to determine risk of recidivism for violence and general recidivism. Based on the methodology, most of the factors now weigh positively in her favor given the amount of time that has passed and how she has adjusted in prison. Mr. Donson admits that nothing can change the heinous nature of the offense itself. She scored incredibly low with a -15 for general recidivism and -2 for violent recidivism. He stresses it is a single tool to help make an assessment for community risk, but he also believes strongly in looking beyond at the evidence of adjustment and behavior, which in her case only supports the low risk assessment in his view. He also believes the depth of the faith factor at play only serves to maintain that change. He felt the risk of recidivism is very unlikely.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Historically the petitioner has changed her stories over time and generally lacked full accountability by failing to take ownership of direct acts against her family despite admitting being at the crime scene. In 2020, records reflect she did not take ownership of the offense with the Prisoner Review Board at all. There are recent versions of the offense provided by the petitioner during both her 2024 psychological evaluation and a 2024 domestic violence evaluation. The psychological evaluation seemed to offer the closest to accountability for the crime but was still very vague. That same year in her domestic violence evaluation, she stated that she was having sex with Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Sobczynski to block the contract killing of Mr. DeLuca and not in payment to kill her family. The evaluation failed to address any of the facts of the crime itself. She then expressed to the Prisoner Review Board in 2024, that she was present at the home at the time of the murders and assisted in the planning of the murders prior, but maintained that she did not kill her parents.

In a written pre-interview statement to the Prisoner Review Board in 2026, Ms. Columbo stated that Mr. Deluca had groomed and sexually exploited her during their relationship, including coercing her to engage in humiliating and degrading sexual activities and sex with other adult men. She stated that as a victim of child sex abuse, she was deeply conditioned to comply with Mr. Deluca's coercive demands. In August 1975, her father found out about the relationship leading to the incident where Mr. Columbo knocked out Mr. Deluca's teeth with the butt of a rifle. By that fall, she was in a state of complete psychological crisis and disorientation due to sexual abuse and Valium use. In this written statement, she now admits to having conversations from October 1975 to February 1976 with Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Sobczynski including plans to have her family killed. In February 1975, she became pregnant after which Mr. Deluca battered Patricia, threw a gun at the floor causing it to shoot her, refused her hospital treatment and removed the bullet, and then coerced her into getting an abortion. Ms. Columbo considers this abortion to be her first of four murders. In this statement, she also now admits that she and Mr. Deluca went to the family home where the two of them carried out the murders of her father, mother, and 13-year-old brother. While she admits all of her involvement and no longer contests her contribution to the murders, she could not recall the details of what happened in the house.

Ms. Columbo's remorse in this case can be drawn from her personal statements. She stated in this interview that there is no atonement or making up for such a crime. She struggles with knowing that Michael never got to live his life. She describes struggling with the realization of the trauma she caused to Michael's friends and classmates who lived through the crime. She does not know how to make up for the harm caused to the rest of her family. She describes her remorse as a long struggle in small steps of acknowledging what she did. She states that even with her growing faith since the 1990's, she struggles



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to accept grace and forgiveness for herself. She instead tries to live a life to make up for what she feels no words can cover. She states she has to believe in the truth of scripture that God can take a bad thing and make something good out of it, so she focuses on how God can use her to do something good for others where she is incarcerated.

Ms. Columbo spoke at length about her life leading to the murders. She confirmed she was only 16 years old when Mr. Deluca hired her at Walgreens. She stated they were separated briefly when she was arrested in 1974 and fired from Walgreens, but he continued to pursue her. She moved in with the Deluca family just before turning 18 years old at the argument that it might help with her acting out. She felt like she was on autopilot and going through the motions while living with incredible shame and confusion about their sexual relationship. There is no mystery that the relationship was inappropriate at its core with a married man in his mid-30's grooming a teenager into sex, but made worse by him introducing other men under the manipulation that it was a normal and consensual swinging lifestyle. In asking some follow-up context, it is very clear that while "swinging" language has been tossed around over the years per the record, there is nothing described that even remotely falls in the category of partner swapping between mutually consenting couples and therefore was clearly a manipulation tactic by Mr. Deluca. Ms. Columbo also confirmed that Mrs. Deluca was aware of what was going on but also admits in hindsight that she believes Mrs. Deluca was just as much a victim of manipulation and domestic abuse. Ms. Columbo and Mr. Deluca moved into their own apartment about a year later. After, this is when the pregnancy incident took place.

In regard to the crime, Ms. Columbo now fully takes responsibility for the planning process. She admits she did in fact create a plan to murder her family. She did in fact create a dossier with information on her family for the purposes of aiding her intended hired hitmen to kill her family. She admits providing that dossier to those hitmen who ultimately never followed through. She admits to providing sexual favors to these men in exchange for committing the murders. She states that she did in fact believe at the time that her dad was looking to hire someone to kill Mr. Deluca, but in hindsight does not believe that was ever reality.

She stresses that she lacks memories of the day of the murder, but she remembers going to the home with the intent of committing the murders. She remembers the gunshots and chaos, as well as what she describes as the loudest silence possible afterward. She knows that she was there and participated and knows it all happened because of her. She admits to lying about the crime at the time of the offenses. She states she wrestled with her crime early on and even contemplated suicide. At one point she wished he had committed suicide prior to committing the murders.

Mr. Bohland asked a number of clarifying questions based on these recent changes, as well as issues records reflect the Board has wrestled with in the past. She did admit that she herself was infatuated with Mr. Deluca and voluntarily sought out a relationship with him, despite also recognizing how inappropriate the relationship was on his part to begin with. Mr. Bohland and Ms. Columbo also discussed prior arguments of human trafficking, and while it is clear that there was sexual manipulation and grooming, she does not view what occurred as trafficking and admits that Mr. Deluca never received anything from the other men in exchange for her sex. She believes the trafficking argument was introduced by well-meaning supporters in the past.



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Records reflect a previous Board Member asked her about a comment in a 2024 evaluation where she stated that prison was a rescue for her and that she believed they would have gone on to murder Mr. Deluca's wife and five children as well. She agrees that prison saved her and that Mr. Deluca would have encouraged taking the lives of his wife and children as well. She stressed it was never discussed, but Mr. Deluca looked at his own family as a hindrance to his freedom.

Mr. Bohland and Ms. Columbo had a frank discussion about the passionate nature of the more heinous injuries, including some which were post-mortem, and whether she believes she committed those specific acts. Ms. Columbo reiterated that she has always struggled with her own lack of detail in this regard. She states confidently that she did not hate her family but rather hated herself. She describes the crime as one of shame and hopelessness. She shared with emotion that it tears her up to even think she could have done what was committed. She does not know if it's God's grace or self-preservation that has prevented her from being able to recall the exact details despite counseling attempts to do so. That said, she believes she must have committed those acts even though she cannot remember them.

She did not recall telling her father at the police station in 1974 that he would be dead after he bonded her out. She does not remember mailing her mother a Mother's Day card after committing the murder, but she does not rule out that she did it. Mr. Bohland and Ms. Columbo also discussed the inheritance motive put forth in the past. She states it is very possible that she mentioned the inheritance to the two intended hitmen as a means of paying for the murders. Regarding the comments made to family about being the sole heir during funeral arrangements, Ms. Columbo states she might have said something to that effect over disagreements regarding burial versus cremation. She does not remember this specifically though. She does recall a probate attorney coming to see if she would contest the family receiving the estate and states she did not contest it because her mom would have wanted the estate to go to her Aunt Caroline.

PAROLE PLANS

Ms. Columbo has a strong parole plan including already being approved for placement at St. Leonard's Grace House program. Mr. David Harris as well as Ms. Anna Cruz of St. Leonard's both testified to their continued acceptance of Ms. Columbo into the program including residential services. Ms. Cruz testified that her interview intake was very strong, that Ms. Columbo was very receptive to any services, and would be a good fit. It was shared that the Women's Justice Institute may have some employment opportunities available. Ms. Columbo is ready to work or volunteer with all the agencies and individuals she has been working with so far. She does recognize the barriers given her life stage and time in prison.

Mr. Deon Griggs of the Illinois Prison Project also testified to working with her as a domestic violence advocate and helping make the connection to St. Leonard's. He would continue to work with her for the first 90 days in a heavy capacity with re-entry and can offer some extended services with hand-offs and connections to other systems as well.

Ms. Columbo historically has carried support from former individuals in custody as well as community members, and a host of institutions. It appears that many of those same supporters continue to sign on their support today.



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In a closing statement to the Board during the interview, Ms. Columbo stated that it is always hard to come before the Board and ask for a second chance when she did not give one herself. She stressed that she is well aware of the opposition, and she often feels like she is 50/50 on her own case, half the time agreeing with the family and Mr. Rose. She often feels like staying where she is, is all she can offer to those she has harmed. She is incredibly self-aware of the weight of the case and the harm she caused, and deep-down feels all she can do is leave it up to God and the Board to make the decision they feel is most appropriate.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Cook County State's Attorney opposes the granting of parole with a 2026 letter. They provide their own statement of facts and attached the appellate court transcript from 1983. They take issue with her historical failure to take accountability for the crimes. While they acknowledge efforts toward rehabilitation and her good institutional record, they believe it does not negate the brutal circumstances of the murders or the sentence imposed by the trial court. The letter asks that all other protest statements and letters past and present be considered and request a three-year set.

There has historically been a strong record of significant opposition in this case Any victim statements provided to the Board were reviewed and discussed in closed session.

ENBANC HISTORY

Ms. Columbo's first year of consideration for parole was in 1984. She has been heard 23 times prior to this hearing. She received 3-year sets in 1984, 1988, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020 and a 2-year set in 2024. Ms. Columbo received one vote in favor of granting in 2020 and 2 votes in favor of granting in 2024.

Closed Executive Session: JBOHLAND-TBUCKLEY

Open Executive Session: RHEATON-HLEMONS

DISCUSSION

Ms. Rachel Domain-White, Ms. Patricia Columbo's attorney, stated Ms. Columbo's institutional hearing was different this time with Mr. Bohland and explained how Ms. Columbo left feeling respected and heard. She stated that Mr. Deluca used the term swinging lifestyle, but Mr. Bohland did not agree with the swinging term, and she believes he is correct. She explained how she appreciates that and so did Ms. Columbo. She then discusses more of the interview. She stated how Ms. Columbo has always had issues with remembering what happened that day and she believes the planning of the case is the worst part to which she does take responsibility for that. She stated present today are anti-violence groups, seven church ministries, several for reentry support, two Republicans of Elk Grove Township and several other people are just here in support. She asked several others who were incarcerated with Ms. Columbo to stand. She then questioned Ms. Columbo on how it affects her with all the support she has today. Ms. Columbo stated its overwhelming appreciation, and she is thankful for that. She stated it is hard to process, and she did not expect so many people. She then questioned Ms. Columbo if she believed what Mr.



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Bohland described was accurate and if she believed that she deserves parole. Ms. Columbo stated she can see great in the other individuals in custody but not herself. She stated she does not know if she deserves it but if given the opportunity, she would do great.

Mr. Jack Donson worked with federal prisons, and he retired in 2011. He explained his job, how he trains and educates around the United States. He stated he has been working with federal prisons for 40 years but recently started a nonprofit regarding the issues within the prisons. He then explained the risk assessment that he completed on Ms. Columbo. He stated this assessment targets the risk of reoffending and he explained how she scored the lowest scores of his career. He stated it is a four-level risk system, and she scored minimal.

Mr. Raymond Rose explained how he was the lead investigator on the murder case. He stated he spent 50 years in law enforcement and has since, recently retired. He has always opposed the parole and release of Ms. Columbo in person, and he describes the murder and mutilation of her entire family. He read a letter to the Board explaining what happened before and after the murders. He stated her desire to be released is not greater than what she did. He then brought up her not having remorse and it is the first time she has ever admitted to participating. He stated that society is not willing to forgive or forget.

Mr. Mark Tygrett, the nephew of Frank and Mary Columbo, cousin of Michael, stated he has been fighting with this his entire life. He stated what she did to her family, and their family is beyond words. He stated his uncle Frank was happy, successful, and treated everyone with respect. He stated that he was good at bowling, and he misses him every day. He stated that he was a very kind person and a wonderful man. He stated his aunt Mary was a southern bell from Georgia, and she raised his mother. He describes the phone call they received and how they did not understand how three people could be dead. He stated he believes if the death penalty would have been a thing, she would not be here today. He shared memories with his cousin, Michael, and explained they were best friends. He believes she knows that she should not be released, and he does not believe someone who can spend eight months planning a murder and then actually go through with it, should ever have a chance at parole. He stated her serving her entire sentence is fair for what she did to her family like a vicious animal. He stated it was a blessing that the police found them first, instead of them because they always went over there on Saturdays. He begged the Board to please not release her.

Ms. Domain-White stated they do not disagree that she planned it, was there and participated in the murders. She stated she does not remember what actions that she took but admits that she was fully involved in the physical murders. She does not believe it to be accurate that Mr. Deluca was not aware of the planning on this murder. She stated most of the conversations with others to murder her family were not with Mr. Deluca present. She stated it is important to note how she has lived those 50 years incarcerated. Ms. Domain-White questioned Mr. Donson about his professional opinion and whether he believes that she is rehabilitated. He stated yes, she does, and he does not believe that she will reoffend.

Ms. Shoffner thanked everyone who showed up in support. She discusses Ms. Columbo's reported sexual abuse from the ages of seven to 12 years old and then the grooming abuse of Mr. Deluca. She stated that she sees her as a victim, but she did participate in some of the most heinous crimes this Board has seen.



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Ms. Terrones questioned Mr. Donson if he was able to review previous petitions that were submitted by previous attorneys. He stated he was able to review all of that including En Banc minutes and her Prisoner Review Board file. Ms. Terrones then questioned the clinical aspect and whether Ms. Domain-White shared that information with Mr. Donson. Ms. Domain-White stated she was not able to.

Ms. Terrones then questions Ms. Domain-White on whether Ms. Columbo participates in formal therapy. Ms. Domain-White stated she received counseling by a psychiatrist, and it was Christian based. She believes it was the most intensive and lasted for about a year. Ms. Terrones questioned what years she received that counseling. Ms. Domain-White stated the first year in therapy with a sister was in the 1990s and the second set of counseling was in the 2000s.

Ms. Domain-White questioned Ms. Columbo if she remembers her name and if she knew if she was a psychiatrist. Ms. Columbo stated her name was Margrett and she believes she was a psychiatrist. She then explains how she did extensive counseling for a year and half and then Sister Margrett passed away. She believes it was in the mid-to-late 1980s. Ms. Domain-White then questioned her about counseling with Ms. Funk. Ms. Columbo stated she believes it was from 2006 to about a year ago because the woman moved.

Ms. Terrones wanted to verify she would still be able to receive her resources if released. Ms. Domain-White stated she is not receiving any services now but is able to take programming regarding trauma and domestic violence.

Mr. Coates thanked everyone for being here today and being a part of the process.

End of Discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

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

After reviewing the 15 Statutory Factors and applying them to the evidence in this case, the Board decided that Ms. Patricia Columbo should be denied parole.

“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- March 26, 2026

Individual in Custody's Name: Pitts, Eddie* IDOC Number: L01404

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 26, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Eddie Pitts L01404.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Ms. Buckley, Mr. Coates, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On February 24, 2026, Board Member Matthew Coates interviewed Mr. Eddie Pitts, in person, at Lawrence Correctional Center. Mr. Pitts was present with his attorneys, Ms. Carolyn Klarquist and Ms. Miriam Sierig. His interview began at 9:34am and ended at 10:55am.

Mr. Pitts was put together with a blue buttoned-up shirt and prepared for the interview. Mr. Pitts' demeanor and attitude was calm and positive. Mr. Pitts was able to communicate clearly about what he was able to recall. Mr. Pitts struggled at times throughout the interview recalling some events from the past. During his answering of a few questions, his memory and testimony would skip midway through to a different topic. Overall, Mr. Coates felt Mr. Pitts answered every question he presented to the best of his cognitive ability, which made for a pleasant interview.

Mr. Coates shared that he previously spoke with Mr. Pitts' attorneys and received their permission to share details on Mr. Pitts' mental and physical health in open session.

Regarding Mr. Pitts' physical health, Mr. Pitts shared he struggles with double vision in his eyes and that as he gets older his knees have more challenges, which causes him to walk slowly.

Mr. Coates shared he entered Lawrence Correctional Center at the check-in desk with Mr. Pitts' attorneys and then greeted Mr. Pitts in the common visitor's area. They all walked together to a private interview room, which was about 60 feet away. During that transition, Mr. Coates was able to walk with Mr. Pitts and observe his ability to ambulate himself.

Mr. Pitts did walk slowly, as if he was walking carefully and cautiously to protect his knee. Furthermore, while slowly, he was able to ambulate around on his own power. Mr. Pitts shared he physically feels good for the most part and enjoys exercising. He mentioned he does pushups and does seated leg raises to strengthen his abdominal muscles. He shared he used to also run in place for exercise, but given his knee, he is unable to do that as much due to the pain. Mr. Pitts stated his exercise keeps him alive. He did feel and express that his physical abilities are slowly drifting away with age.



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Regarding his mental health, Mr. Pitts shared he maintains a positive attitude for the most part and struggles with short-term memory due to his dementia. He takes his dementia medication regularly but often feels it does not work due to him still experiencing memory issues. He shared he felt his dementia is slowly taking his mind and intelligence. When he feels stressed about it, he turns to his exercise routine to cope, which helps him greatly.

During his trial, in 1978, Mr. Pitts was evaluated by the Forensic Psychiatry Program from the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and was initially found unfit mentally to stand trial. Following two additional mental health evaluations, he was eventually considered fit for trial, so long as he took his medication regularly. He presented at that time with a history of reoccurring disturbing auditory hallucinations. Through much of his incarceration, his attorney's shared his condition went untreated, but he was stable. In 2023, he was designated as Severely Mentally Ill in the Illinois Department of Corrections mental health classification system. The evaluating doctor, Dr. Susnjar, found neither suicidal, nor homicidal ideations. Mr. Pitts was also diagnosed with dementia in 2022. After considering all of the documentation in his file, it is fair to say that there is a strong probability that Mr. Pitts was experiencing a mental health episode of auditory hallucinations during the commission of his murder offense.

Mr. Pitts is currently 73 years old and has been incarcerated for over 49 years. Mr. Pitts has been at Lawrence Correctional Center since June of 2023. He is classified as a maximum-security individual with no escape concerns. Mr. Pitts is currently on "A" grade and currently resides in the Infirmary Unit at Lawrence Correctional Center.

On April 21, 1980, following a jury trial, Mr. Pitts was convicted of the Murder of Jerry Keane and sentenced to 150 to 300 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. Mr. Pitts has an MSR date of February 17, 2117.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Record reflect that on November 30, 1976, at 3:45 p.m. at 6620 S. Harvard in Chicago, the victim Mr. Jerry Keane, a service man for People's Gas Company, was making a service call at that location. While in the basement inspecting the furnace, Mr. Pitts at the age of 24, snuck up behind the victim and stabbed him 23 times, causing the death of Mr. Keane. Mr. Pitts then fled, later disposing of the knife. Another gas company employee, Mr. Winston McGain witnessed the killing and was told by Mr. Keane during the attack to run and get help. Mr. McGain then provided police with a description of Mr. Pitts, which led to his arrest a short time later.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

While reviewing Mr. Pitts' file, Mr. Coates did not find any documentation or evidence to suggest he had a criminal history prior to committing his holding offense.



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INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

During the course of Mr. Pitts' incarceration, he has worked as a groundskeeper, painter and dishwasher. His life revolves around the things he cares about, which are nature, art, exercise and trying to understand the law. When allowed, he enjoys being outside.

Since 1998, Mr. Pitts has received 23 tickets; eight of them being considered major, and 15 are considered minor. His tickets range from contraband, damage or misuse of property, unauthorized movement, abuse of privileges and insolence. Since 1998 he has had one ticket of violence, which was his most recent ticket in May of 2022, for a violent assault of another inmate, which led to that inmate needing brain surgery.

Mr. Pitts' petition reflects that his assault occurred after another individual in custody insulted him with a racial slur and ultimately threw a wheelchair at him. As Mr. Pitts was not designated in the system as severely mentally ill at this time, Mr. Coates does not believe a review was done to determine whether this incident involved Mr. Pitts having a mental health episode. He was given six months of segregation and after his 2023 severely mental health designation, any future disciplinary incident would be reviewed to determine whether the conduct at issue is related to his mental health.

Mr. Pitts shared he lives with a cellmate in the medical unit, and his cellmate is unable to walk. He shared he does just fine with having a cellmate, but if given the choice, he would rather be alone and have a cell just to himself.

Throughout his 49 years of incarceration, Mr. Pitts has remained in continuous contact with his family. After Mr. Pitts was transferred to Dixon Correctional Center in 2011, his brother Jesse and his wife would visit him every month. Since his transfer to Lawrence Correctional Center in 2023, he has received visits from his sister Ms. Clara Pitts, nephew Mr. Zebedee Pitts, and his niece Ms. Willie Mae Wade. While many of his family members have passed away, his remaining family includes Gene Pitts, Lude Mae Pitts, Willie B. Pitts, Richards Pitts, Clara Pitts and Sarah Jane Liggon. If Mr. Pitts were to be released, they have shared they will offer their full support for him.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Pitts took full accountability for the offense and acknowledged that he deserved to be punished and expressed deep remorse for harming and killing Mr. Keane, as he shared his account of the offense. Mr. Pitts recalled hearing voices in his head telling him that he needed to fight for his life. This is when he grabbed his pocketknife as the voices continued saying kill him or he's going to kill you. He also recalled being called a coward by the voices in his head. He referenced these same auditory hallucinations during his evaluation with the Forensic Psychiatry Program. Furthermore, Mr. Pitts shared he feels mad and sad about that situation. He stated he feels embarrassed and ashamed of himself. Lastly, stating he feels sorry for killing Mr. Keane.



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PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Pitts has been offered admission as a permanent resident at Central Nursing Home. This is a skilled nursing facility located at 2450 N. Central Avenue in Chicago. Central Nursing Home offers comprehensive mental health programming for those suffering from chronic mental health issues.

The staff work closely with mental health professionals to ensure that residents have treatment plans that best aid in gaining and maintaining stable mental health.

For admission, Mr. Pitts would be evaluated by Maximus Clinical Services, in partnership with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services. This evaluation would serve to ensure that his mental and physical health needs will be met at Central Nursing Home, which has an on-site psychiatrist.

Central Nursing Home would develop individual care plan for Mr. Pitts, as they offer nursing, behavioral and social services. This facility provides residents with activities, physical, occupational and speech therapy. The staff at Central is aware of Mr. Pitts' medical diagnoses and a team of experienced clinicians would be available to work with him.

Furthermore, per the Identified Offenders Program, which is designed to prevent abuse and promote the safety of residents, staff and visitors from the risk of harm posed by residents with criminal backgrounds, Illinois' long-term care facilities are required to conduct background screening on all new admissions and notify the staff of Central Nursing Home of Mr. Pitts' offenses before approving his placement.

For individuals such as Mr. Pitts, within 24 hours of arrival at Central Nursing Home, Illinois State Police would conduct a criminal investigation while a forensic psychologist conducts a risk assessment. A final report would then be issued to the long-term care facility with the resident's risk profile to help provide guidance in developing a care plan for the offender.

Mr. Pitts would also have the reentry support from his family, the Illinois Prison Project and NAMI Chicago.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Cook County States Attorney objects to parole release, and they were present at the hearing.

Any victim statements provided to the Board were discussed in closed session.

ENBANC HISTORY

Mr. Pitts first became eligible for parole consideration in 1987. Including this date's hearing, Mr. Pitts has been presented for parole 26 times. Mr. Pitts received three-year sets on seven different occasions, with those years being 1988, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2016.



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DISCUSSION

Ms. Carolyn Klarquist, Mr. Pitts' attorney, stated he is not receiving proper mental health care while incarcerated. She stated he will be 74 years old in July, and his family has a history of dementia. She shared his brother had dementia and is now deceased. She stated Central Nursing Home made it very clear that they are aware of his mental health, dementia and criminal history. They can provide for him while Illinois Department of Corrections cannot. She stated Illinois Prison Project has placed a couple individuals from medical clemency to Central Nursing Home. She explained that he cannot leave his room, and he will be in a room by himself. She stated the doors are locked and secured with an alarm. She discussed his disciplinary history and stated he has always been remorseful for his crime. She thinks this is the best option for him and he cannot receive the psychiatric help he needs while being incarcerated. Due to the amount of time that he has been incarcerated, she believes his release to a nursing home is what is appropriate.

Ms. Terrones questioned Ms. Klarquist if Central Nursing Home could provide help with memory care and she stated yes, she verified that doors would be always locked in the memory unit.

Mr. Zebedee Pitts, Mr. Eddie Pitts' nephew stated he is here to support his uncle any way he can. He then shared the struggles that he has with writing letters therefore he has not received anything in several years.

Ms. Terrones questioned Mr. Pitts whether he is willing to take care of him by being his power of attorney. He stated he was aware of the responsibilities.

Mr. Heaton questioned Mr. Zebedee Pitts about what he would do if his uncle, Mr. Pitts said he did not like it; he asked him if he would tell him that he had to stay. Mr. Zebedee Pitts stated he would tell him he is staying there, even if he completes his parole.

Ms. Klarquist stated they offer end-of-life care and there is no plan for him beyond a stay at Central.

Mr. Grubbs questioned Ms. Klarquist about how quickly they would take guardianship. She stated that Illinois Department of Corrections would transport him to Central Nursing Home.

Ms. Klarquist stated they do not know how much time he has left, he is healthy but with his dementia it can be pretty severe. She explained how he is able to regulate his behavior.

Ms. Courtney Quam, Cook County Assistant State's Attorney, stated the Board is in the same place last year when he was denied parole. She stated she reached out to the facility herself; they shared the floors are not locked and the rooms are shared. She questioned what the purpose of security is and



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they stated it is so no one can leave. She stated the woman she spoke to on the phone was Ms. Dorian Hickman. She explains the incident that led another individual in custody to have brain surgery over an attack done by Mr. Pitts. She stated that Central Nursing Home stated they are not equipped for that and if something were to arise, they only have social workers. She explained they do not have experience in serious violence; therefore, they would have to call the police. She then stated when they have called the police, they take a long time to respond and if he would harm someone, that is too high of a risk. She then reads pages from Mr. Pitts' supplemental petition and argued. She stated the State is worried about the other patients that are living in the nursing home and are vulnerable. She stated the employees do not have the necessary training to deal with Mr. Pitts.

Ms. Klarquist argues about the fact about the 2022 ticket and the conversation that Ms. Quam had on the phone with a social worker at the facility. She stated she trusts Central Nursing Home to be able to make that decision on who can be admitted. She stated they were given all of his information and still chose to accept him. She stated this is a therapeutic environment unlike Illinois Department of Corrections. She stated he has a roommate now, the staff like him, and she believes that Board members like him as well. She believes his parole plan is appropriate and it is the only parole plan available for him.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (MCOATES-JGRUBBS). Motion prevailed by a 7-2 vote. Members voting in favor were Mr. Coates, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Lemons, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones and Mr. Tupy. Mr. Bohland and Ms. Buckley dissented.

After reviewing the 15 Statutory Factors and applying them to the evidence in this case, the Board decided that Mr. Eddie Pitts should be granted parole.

"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."