



STATE OF ILLINOIS
JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR
PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION- September 25, 2025

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on September 25, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following individuals in custody:

R65423	Wells, Willie (Youthful Parole)
R55945	Crockett, Vernard* (Youthful Parole)
C01441	Pearson, Dennis* (Indeterminate Case)

****Cook County Case***

The meeting was called to order by Robin Shoffner, Board Member.

Roll call was taken by Recording Secretary Ellen Wayne

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mr. Jared Bohland	X	
Mr. Matthew Coates	X	
Ms. Julie Globokar	X	
Mr. Jeffrey Grubbs	X	
Mr. Rodger Heaton	X	
Ms. Robin Shoffner	X	
Ms. Carmen Terrones	X	
Ms. Krystal Tison	X	
Mr. Kenneth Tupy	X	

9 Members Present

0 Members Absent

The Board heard the case of Willie Wells R65423, Vernard Crockett R55945, and Dennis Pearson C01441.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL for 07-31-2025 JGRUBBS & MCOATES

Open Session: JGRUBBS-KTUPY

Meeting was adjourned by: MCOATES-KTUPY



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PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET
OPEN SESSION- September 25, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Willie Wells IDOC Number: R65423

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on September 25, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Willie Wells R65423.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Ms. Globokar, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On August 6, 2025, Mr. Willie Wells IDOC #R65423 was interviewed at Illinois River Correctional Center via Webex by Board Member Rodger Heaton. Mr. Wells is represented by Ms. Sheree A. Davis, Attorney at Law, who was present for the interview. Mr. Wells is classified currently as A grade under Medium Security and has no escape risk.

After resentencing in January 2020, Mr. Wells' Mandatory Supervised Release date is February 2, 2041. He will be 53 years old; he is currently 37 years old at the time of this hearing.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Mr. Wells was driving around with three friends on February 2, 2005. One of his friends, Mr. Giles had stolen a car, and they took turns driving it. Mr. Wells was driving at the time of the beginning of his holding offense, and one of the other friends, Mr. Baskin who was 15 years old, saw a young woman driving in another car, and Mr. Baskins told the others that he wanted that car. Mr. Wells pulled in front of the other car that the woman was driving. Mr. Wells got out of the car he was driving, pointed a BB gun at the woman, and ordered her out of her car. At that point, Mr. Wells got into her car as the driver. Mr. Baskins ordered the woman to get into the back seat of the car with him and she complied. The car was then driven to a nearby alley, and Mr. Baskins ordered the woman to strip naked and then Mr. Baskins raped her. Mr. Baskins directed Mr. Wells to make the woman perform oral sex on Mr. Wells even while she was still being assaulted in the back seat by Mr. Baskins. After several minutes of those sexual assaults in the car, they took the woman to an abandoned house approximately one block from where Mr. Wells lived. They took the woman into the abandoned house, and Mr. Baskins and another of the co-defendants, Mr. Smith, Mr. Baskins' brother, continued to sexually assault the woman there.

Mr. Wells left while the sexual assaults were continuing to occur and went home. Once there, he felt bad, so he went back to the abandoned house and found the woman naked in the corner of an upstairs room. He covered her with a sheet pulled from the window and took her at gunpoint to the car that Mr. Giles had stolen.



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Mr. Baskins and Mr. Giles returned to the location where Mr. Wells was with the woman in her car, and Mr. Wells then put the woman and her clothes back in her own car and drove her home. As she was getting out to go into her home, she asked for her Bible from her car. Mr. Wells could not find the Bible, left in her car, and was later chased by the police in that car, which led to a crash. Mr. Wells jumped out of her crashed stolen car and attempted to flee police on foot. He was caught, and she later identified him as one of the individuals who had kidnapped, sexually assaulted her, and hijacked her car.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

This was discussed in closed session.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Wells appears to have worked in an Illinois Department of Corrections Dietary job for one to two months before he was transferred back to the county before his re-sentencing. He also worked as a volunteer aide during COVID. Mr. Wells stated he did not work an Illinois Department of Corrections job while at Illinois River Correctional Center because he was busy working on his schooling and programming.

Cat Simulators Hydraulic Excavator is an employer that Mr. Wells explained comes into the prison and help prepare individuals in custody to go to Illinois Central College at no cost, and that he has been learning excavation in this way.

Mr. Wells has received several certificates.

Mr. Wells testified that he started the process of earning a high school diploma through Cornerstone Christian Correspondence School during COVID, but at this point, he has the General Education Development study book in his cell, and he is preparing to take the GED test.

He reports also that he is in Narcotics Anonymous within Illinois Department of Corrections, which he enrolled in due to his mother's addiction, as he wanted to understand better.

He had seven major tickets early in his incarceration from 2008-2012 but has also had three in more recent years. On 12/18/22, he received a ticket for Drugs/K-2 which reflects he lied to Intel during the investigation and was sent to segregation for 76 days. Mr. Wells stated a former individual in custody he knew sent him some K-2 laced paper and when he was questioned about it, he told them he only knew the sender's first name and Intel thought he was lying.

On 3/21/24, he received a ticket for Insolence to Correctional Officer when he stated, "get the F out of here." He stated he had just turned in his parole petition and a Correctional Officer was rushing him, and his back was hurt from weightlifting. This incident was two weeks after a different ticket that got expunged.



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On 8/18/24, he received a ticket for Unauthorized movement due to a medical concern and stated he was five minutes late returning from the shower.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

By way of explanation of why he participated in this horrific set of crimes, Mr. Wells explained that he was afraid he was going to be a father, and he was angry over his own pain. He was also concerned about financial pressure from his girlfriend's pregnancy, and one of his sister's had been raped too. All of this trauma combined contributed to his actions and decisions. He noted that he is remorseful and has tried to reach out to the victim to apologize to her.

Mr. Wells also explained that he is big on forgiveness, so he has forgiven his stepmother for prior abuse. He further explained that he is serious about his Christian faith.

PAROLE PLANS

He stated that he expects to start working at Popeye's Chicken upon his release while he finishes his schooling to be an Excavator. Eventually, he wants to get a Commercial Driver's License for his trucking certification so he can run his own Box Truck company like his father. He plans to obtain his license at Illinois Central College. He reported that he was currently working on a forklift license from Illinois Central College, in a two-week program that he was in the middle of at the time of the interview.

Mr. Wells sister Deitra found an apartment at 623 NE Monroe Street in Peoria, that he could rent for \$600 a month, and it is at a place that is approved for parolees to live per the Peoria Police Department.

To the extent that he has expressed interest in a not-for-profit organization, something his sister Shantelle mentioned, Mr. Wells explained that he believes that trauma and triggers are something important for people to understand, and he wants to start a "Winner's Circle" which is a peace circle where people share what they need help with. He anticipates that he would do this in a church or a courthouse, if allowed, while he was on parole.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

There was no opposition presented at the time of the hearing.

ENBANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Wells' first time in front of the Board for parole consideration.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Sheree Davis, Mr. Wells' attorney, stated there was only a few things she wanted to mention. She explained how he plans on using the curriculum he has learned when he is released. She stated there was a ten-year period where he did not receive any tickets. She explained how the ticket in March of 2024 was for contraband, but it was the cellmate who was cooking in the room, and it was not related to drugs,



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only the articles and materials that were in the room. She stated both individuals were made responsible for it. She explained how one of his sisters is the manager at Popeyes and assured that he can get a job there and they allow convicted felons to work in that establishment. She stated that it will just be a transitional plan for him. She stated he meets the criteria to get into that type of apartment as well. She then asked Mr. Wells to explain to the Board what he has learned since being incarcerated.

Mr. Wells stated he has learned the importance of family and friends. He was selfish at one point in his life and was only thinking about himself. He stated he was not educated then like he is now. He stated hurt people, hurt people. His family has suffered the last 20 years because of his mistake. He stated he now understands the importance of a community and would like to educate others.

Ms. Davis asked Mr. Wells to explain difference of himself at the age of 17 years old to now 37 years old.

Mr. Wells stated during that time he was messed up; he was hurting but that was normal to him. He stated he was verbally and sexually abused so he did not know anything else. Once he was incarcerated, he took a course called Repurpose Trauma and it brought tears to his eyes due to his childhood. He stated he was the class clown and did not take others seriously because he was hurting from the abuse. He has since then learned about triggers and trauma from verbal, physical and sexual assault. He now knows it is okay to talk about this and he is not afraid to be honest anymore. He is not afraid to stand up anymore when called upon. He is ready not only with words but actions.

Ms. Davis questioned Mr. Wells on what tools he has learned how to cope with pressures or things that might arise if he was released.

Mr. Wells stated anger management and conflict resolution teaches you how to talk to others. He stated he comes in contact with 100 people every other week with the program he facilitates. He stated its very easy for him to talk to others and he is not afraid to learn something different. He wanted to be able to deal with his emotions and the importance of building healthy relationships. He was once the problem but now he is the solution. He wants to do community services, and he would like to start an outreach program to educate the importance of building relationships. He explained how people think that police are out to get them, he wants to educate them why they are not and how they should stop destroying the community. He said if he can do it, they can do it. He stated the best thing you can do is open up your ears and learn.

Ms. Terrones questioned how long Mr. Wells participated with Precious Blood for restorative purposes. Mr. Wells stated it was only four days, but he stays in contact with one of the sisters.

Ms. Terrones questioned if he participated in programs for sex offenders and if they had been offered or if he looked into them. Mr. Wells stated he stated he asked about that two years ago because he thought it was very important, but it was not available in Illinois River Correctional Center.

Ms. Terrones stated that restorative justice has been beneficial but questioned if he had participated in any structured therapy.



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Mr. Wells stated he took Repurposed Trauma, which is where you talk about trauma and triggers. He stated it was a six-week course, and he has taken it two times.

Ms. Terrones questioned if he has sought out any therapy while incarcerated. Mr. Wells stated he has not because he is not on medication, and he is not severely mentally ill. He stated he asked to be evaluated but it was only for medication.

End of Discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (RHEATON-JBOHLAND). 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. Willie Wells 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- September 25, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Vernard Crockett* IDOC Number: R55945

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on September 25, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Vernard Crockett R55945.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Ms. Globokar, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On June 18, 2025, Mr. Vernard Crockett IDOC #R55945 was interviewed at Robinson Correctional Center via Webex by Board Member Rodger Heaton. Mr. Crockett is represented by Ms. Nadia Woods with Illinois Prison Project, who was present for the interview.

After resentencing in February 2022, Mr. Crockett's Mandatory Supervised Release date is October 17, 2027. He will be 40 years old and is currently 37 years old at the time of this hearing.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Appellate opinion dated 9/28/12 reflects that Vernard Crockett offered two inconsistent alibis that were established to be false by the police, and then Vernard Crockett made three substantially consistent statements admitting arranging the robbery of Jasmine Robinson because Mr. Lamar wanted to "hit a lick" (meaning to rob someone). Vernard Crockett said he was aware that Mr. Lamar carried a handgun and believed Jasmine would not release the \$650 he knew to be in her possession unless she was threatened with a weapon. Vernard Crockett offered to set it up such that he and Mr. Lamar would go to Jasmine's home to look at results of a pregnancy test. Vernard Crockett and Mr. Lamar had agreed on a signal to begin the robbery. Vernard Crockett was to wink at Mr. Lamar once in the basement.

In one of the three statements, Vernard Crockett stated that he told Mr. Lamar to bring the gun as a threat, but not to use it to hurt the victim. He stated that he had examined the handgun on the Sunday prior to the arranged Tuesday robbery. Vernard Crockett further stated that he accompanied Mr. Lamar to Mr. Lamar's house to pick up the gun and proceeded to Jasmine's house on Tuesday.

While at Jasmine's house, Vernard Crockett requested something to drink, and Jasmine poured him a glass of Bacardi. When they went to the basement, Vernard Crockett placed the glass on a freezer and asked Jasmine to retrieve a compact disk. She did and returned, turning on music "real loud." Vernard Crockett then gave the signal. Mr. Lamar asked Jasmine where the money was. Jasmine turned to Vernard Crockett in response. Mr. Lamar continued to demand the money until he shot her in the back. Vernard



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Crockett then fled from the home and heard three or four more gunshots as he fled. He did not report the shooting.

When interviewed by the Assistant State's Attorney, and asked if he did the shooting, he said if he were to rob and shoot someone, he would never admit it.

Vernard Crockett testified at his own trial, denying he arranged the robbery. He testified that Jasmine asked him to come over to look at the pregnancy test results with her. He testified that he encountered Mr. Lamar while on the way to Jasmine's house and invited Mr. Lamar to walk with him. When they arrived, he asked for a drink. He set it down on the freezer, because the drink she brought him was Bacardi, and he does not drink Bacardi. He asked her to get the compact disk, and she did. When she returned with it, and Mr. Lamar pulled a handgun. He testified he had not known the Mr. Lamar had a gun. He testified that he asked Mr. Lamar to put the gun away. Jasmine asked Mr. Lamar to leave, threatening to call the police. Vernard Crockett testified that he got into a heated exchange with Mr. Lamar, Jasmine approached Mr. Lamar and pushed him. Mr. Lamar then pushed her to the ground and shot her once. He immediately fled and heard the other shots while fleeing. He did not report the shooting because of fear for hew and his family's safety. The gun was never recovered. A positive home pregnancy was test found in the victim's dresser drawer.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

This was discussed in closed session.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Crockett has had several jobs since being incarcerated. He worked as a maintenance and construction worker, seg unit janitor, dietary department worker, and a porter within restrictive housing unit for nearly a year with very positive assessments from Illinois Department of Correction supervisors. They stated, "he surpasses expectation."

Mr. Crockett has received several certificates during his incarceration such as his high school diploma from King's Word Academy with a grade point average of 3.47.

Mr. Crockett has only one ticket in the last decade, which was on 10/19/22 for participating in a three-way call when his mother put another phone up to the speaker in her call with Mr. Crockett and allowed another individual to say hello and happy birthday to Mr. Crockett.

All other ticket history occurred between 2007 and 2013 with five major tickets such as drugs, interfering with investigation, contraband, trading/trafficking.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Crockett stated he took Ronald Lamar, who he had gotten to know in the In My Shoes probation program, to Jasmine's house under the guise of going there to view the pregnancy test results. He had talked with Mr. Lamar about him robbing Jasmine's mother's service weapon which he thought



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might be found in the house, while he distracted Jasmine. They would then sell the gun on the street and split the proceeds. At the house, Jasmine showed Vernard that the pregnancy test was negative. He stated he only learned from his attorney during the pendency of his court case that she was in fact pregnant when killed. Mr. Lamar changed the plan once they were in the house and confronted Jasmine about the gun, and she resisted and tried to flee the scene, and Mr. Lamar shot her. Mr. Lamar was questioned by the police and told them about the incident but reversed the roles that he and Vernard had played in the crime.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Crockett states he wants to get his Commercial Driver's License and be a truck driver. When asked what appeals to him about this, he explained that he likes travel and has heard it can be lucrative. He worked for 90 days at Hill Correctional Center doing electrician work such as fluorescent light removal and installation and changing exhaust fans on roofs, so he could use his electrician training to remodel houses while he pursues his Commercial Driver's License.

He stated he would also like to start a non-profit community organization with his sisters to try to help the youth in the community.

In the supplemental petition, his attorneys have explained that he has been tentatively accepted into St. Leonard's, which can help provide transitional housing, and its integrated case management services, mentorship, and employment assistance. He has strong family support from his mother, sisters and son.

Illinois Prison Project has pledged its support with its community partners such as Restore Justice, SAFER, Chicago Torture Justice Center and NAMI support such as peer support groups, helpline, individual support and coaching.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Cook County Assistant State's Attorney objects to early release on parole and argues that parole is a matter of grace and is not a legal right. She argues that Mr. Crockett has not demonstrated full acceptance of responsibility and insight into his crime. She acknowledges that he states he is sorry for his actions and the fact that this crime has deeply affected multiple parties involved but expresses dissatisfaction with his failure to detail or take responsibility for HIS actions that led to the 16-year-old girl's murder. She emphasizes that it was Mr. Crockett who offered the girl up to Mr. Lamar as a person they could rob and participated in the crime knowing that Mr. Lamar had a firearm. She expresses concern that Mr. Crockett likewise did not genuinely accept responsibility for his actions in his 2024 executive clemency petition which is still pending.

The State's Attorney acknowledges Mr. Crockett's programming and other rehabilitative programming efforts while incarcerated but argues that failure to demonstrate full acceptance and insight into the crime outweighs his programming. Her point is that the programming has not caused him to learn, understand and fully accept personal accountability for this murder, and therefore he has not been fully rehabilitated.



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ENBANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Crockett's first time in front of the Board for a parole consideration.

Closed Executive Session: RHEATON-KTISON

Open Executive Session: RHEATON-KTUPY

DISCUSSION

Ms. Nadia Woods, Mr. Crockett's attorney, stated some of his loved ones are in person for support. She stated she met him two years ago and got to know him and his loved ones. The first time she asked about the offense he stated his choices led to this trauma for two families. The victim in the case attended school with Mr. Crockett and she stated he was groomed by the gang. She explained the same trust he had for Jasmine; she had for him, and he violated that trust. She stated he has never owned a gun, shot a gun or seen someone shoot a gun prior to the offense. She stated he thought he would make money from the robbery and that would be it. She stated he has always had a close relationship with family and his greatest pride and accomplishment is being a father. She stated he still grieves the loss of his friend and the fact she was four weeks pregnant, and it could have been his child. She stated he never confessed to this crime, there were only written confessions from his co-defendant. She stated he has not changed his story since after trial either. In 21 years of incarceration, he did at first claim innocence at his trial because he thought he was innocent because he did not pull the trigger. He has owned up to what happened and has taken responsibility for that. She stated the armed robbery was overturned and he was offered a change of resentencing back in 2010, but Youthful Parole was not a thing yet. She explained how he was only 23 years old at the time and did not have the maturity yet. She stated he was resentenced to 24 years which was the same as the codefendant, the shooter in this case. She stated the Judge resentenced him knowing that he would be able to have a chance at parole. She discusses psychological testing and states he just lost his father last year and shows how he was matured. She explained how he was reliant on alcohol and marijuana as a teenager. She stated he was not able to say goodbye, but he was able to process that himself with his own coping mechanisms that he learned. She stated he has taken any course that has been offered and that all his certificates were earned before his resentencing because he took advantage of all opportunities. She explained that due to him being resentenced, he has no access to courses right now. She stated he was transferred a week ago and she has had three visits so far and he was reported to be still taking more courses and educational materials. She stated he has parole plans with confirmation of St. Leonard's for housing.

Mr. Heaton questioned Ms. Woods about his story changing. Ms. Woods stated his story never changed. Mr. Heaton stated at trial he denied organizing the robbery.

Mr. Vershawn Crockett, son of Mr. Crockett, stated his father is resilient and over the years he has been able to stay positive. He is charismatic and he is responsible with furthering his education. He described his relationship with his father and stated for as long as he can remember, he has been healthy despite him not being there. He always gives advice and does the best he can to raise him through the phone or a 2-hour visit. He stated this is the first time he has heard what actually happened because they



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never really discussed it. H stated he was hard on him as a teenager and told him to watch who he hangs out with and continue his schooling. It would be a lot to him and his family if he was granted parole today because he has lost a lot of time with family. He explained how Mr. Crockett's grandfather passing was really tough on him, and it would be beneficial for him to be able to rebuild with his father.

Mr. Crockett started off by thanking the Board for this opportunity. He stated he is writing this letter with deep remorse. He stated she was more than just a friend to him, and she had her entire life ahead of her. He stated her death caused pain that reaches far from her family to him. She explained how the trust she had in him is the reason she is gone today. He stated he failed her as a friend, and he has guilt for the life she could have lived and the child that never had a chance to be born. He stated he has a son he could not watch grow up. He stated he knows his pain and his family's pain is not anything compared to the pain that Jasmine's family feels. He stated its obvious to him now that quick, easy money is dangerous and since the day he walked into Illinois Department of Corrections, he has done everything he can to better himself. He explained how he has learned discipline and patience since being incarcerated and he understands what he did caused a ripple effect. He stated his first priority if released would be to build a relationship with his son and then start a nonprofit. He then explained how he wants to be a mentor to young men so he can speak openly about his mistakes. He stated he cannot bring her back, but he can honor her by living the rest of his life with a purpose. He stated he knows the power of second changes and understands the value of life.

End of discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (RHEATON-KTUPY) 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. Vernard Crockett 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- September 25, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Dennis Pearson IDOC Number: C01441

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 1001 N. Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois, on September 25, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Dennis Pearson C01441.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Ms. Globokar, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Ellen Wayne

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On September 28, 2025, Mr. Dennis Pearson IDOC #C01441 was interviewed at Vienna Correctional Center via Webex by Board Member Kenneth Tupy. Mr. Pearson was convicted of Aggravated Kidnapping (sentenced to 100-125 years), Rape (sentenced to 100-125 years) to be served concurrently, and additionally Attempt Murder (sentenced to 10-15 years) to be served consecutive to the Kidnapping and Rape Convictions in Cook County.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On October 22nd, 1968, Mrs. Sally Heaton who was married and a mother of three at the time, left her place of employment at Michigan Bell Telephone Company in Kalamazoo, Michigan and went with a group of friends to a lounge in the area. Around 2:00 a.m. Mrs. Heaton was leaving the lounge when her friend asked her to drive two men, the petitioner Dennis Pearson and co-defendant Nelson Weaver, west toward Mattawan. She reluctantly agreed to do so. Once near Mattawan, Mrs. Heaton was instructed to drive on a farm road at which point the co-defendant pulled a revolver and explained that they were going to be robbing her and taking her vehicle. Mrs. Heaton gave them her purse and pleaded to be released to her family. At this point, Mr. Pearson got out of the vehicle, dragged Mrs. Heaton out of the driver's seat, forced her into the rear seat of the vehicle, struck her numerous times in the face and body, and then raped her with force. Then Mr. Pearson and Mr. Weaver took over the vehicle keeping Mrs. Heaton hostage. The co-defendant drove the vehicle while Mr. Pearson remained in the backseat with Mrs. Heaton to prevent her from crying out or alerting anyone passing by.

They drove until Benton Harbor, Michigan where they stopped again. Mr. Pearson then raped Mrs. Heaton again followed immediately by the co-defendant raping Mrs. Heaton. When she resisted, Mr. Pearson struck her in the face and body again. They then continued driving with Mr. Pearson remaining in the back seat with Mrs. Heaton holding on to her until they reached the Northwest side of Cook County.

At this point they exited the Northwest Tollway onto a deserted farm road. Stopping the vehicle again, Mr. Pearson first beat and then raped Mrs. Heaton a third time and the co-defendant raped Mrs. Heaton a second time while Mr. Pearson stood guard. After they were done raping her, the co-defendant



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attempted to strangle Mrs. Heaton but she successfully resisted him. He then dragged her out of the vehicle and pulled the revolver. Both Mr. Pearson and Mr. Weaver then told her they could not let her go because she would identify them, and they would rather shoot it out with the police in the street than return to prison. It is noted that Mr. Pearson had been on parole for his second conviction in the state of Michigan for only three weeks at the time of this offense.

Mrs. Heaton plead for her life which was disregarded, at which point the co-defendant placed a small caliber revolver to the back of her head. Mr. Pearson stated to his co-defendant, "you know what you've got to do, go ahead and do it." With that, the co-defendant shot Mrs. Heaton once in the back of the head, once in the throat, one through her right eye, and once in the right hand. They then covered her body with straw and manure and left her to die.

Approximately an hour later, Mrs. Heaton regained consciousness and struggled three quarters of a mile back to the Tollway where she was picked up by a passing citizen. When taken to the hospital, her pulse was 70 and she had lost approximately six pints of blood.

Both Mr. Pearson and Mr. Weaver were arrested the following Saturday, October 26th, by FBI agents in Battle Creek, ML Mrs. Heaton's car was found abandoned in Berwyn, Illinois.

During, the course of the jury trial for Mr. Pearson, he made death threats against Judge Phillip Romiti, Assistant State's Attorney Matthew Walsh, and his court appointed attorney Roland Cassata. Prior to the jury deliberating the case, the petitioner stood up in the courtroom and insulted the prosecutor, judge, and jury by making insulting and profane remarks.

While awaiting preliminary hearing in Illinois, he attempted to escape from the police court in Niles, IL. While awaiting trial in Cook County Jail, both he and his co-defendant attempted to escape by getting out of their cells and were caught just before they were able to escape the compound.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

In 1960, Mr. Pearson was convicted of Breaking and Entering with a 1to15-year sentence for which he was paroled in 1961. Mr. Pearson violated that parole in 1962.

In 1964, Mr. Pearson was convicted of Breaking and Entering again, this time with a three-to-five-year sentence. While incarcerated, Mr. Pearson escaped from prison in 1965. Mr. Pearson was convicted of Escaping a Penal Institution and appears to have gained an extradition warrant from Missouri for involvement in a burglary during the time of escape.

Mr. Pearson was paroled in 1968. He was only on parole for three weeks before he violated that term by committing the holding offenses. Mr. Pearson also has a standing warrant upon release from prison from Cook County for a conviction of contempt of court which appears to be from incidents in 1999.



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INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Pearson has obtained his GED in prison. He also has taken some college credit classes.

As for institutional work history, per the 2018 SPIN assessment, Mr. Pearson has worked in the past as a clerk, in the gymnasium, in the general store, and as a math tutor. That assessment states that he can no longer work due to health issues. He stated to the Board during interview that he has not worked since 2002 when he earned all the assault/threat tickets.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Pearson does not acknowledge the facts of the crime and takes no responsibility for his actions. He adamantly maintains his innocence to the crime. Previously, Mr. Pearson claimed that it is the burden of the Prisoner Review Board to prove his guilt.

PAROLE PLANS

Per both the file as well as his interview, Mr. Pearson has no parole plan. Mr. Pearson stated that his primary goal in life is to publish his book on astronomy. Per the 2018 SPIN assessment, he sent a book off to be published on astronomy at that time.

He did request that the Prisoner Review Board give him a chance at parole, but he has no parole plans. He would like to be released to somewhere that could help him with getting identification and living arrangements, but he has not contacted any place that would help. When asked about supporting himself, he stated he has a book on Astrology that will be a bestseller.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Cook County opposes the granting of parole for Mr. Pearson with a lengthy letter submitted to our office. The remainder opposing were discussed in closed session.

ENBANC HISTORY

Mr. Pearson has not had any votes for parole during his prior parole hearings.

Closed Executive Session: RHEATON-KTISON

Open Executive Session: RHEATON-KTUPY

DISCUSSION

Mr. Tupy stated he would like Mr. Pearson to tell the Board why they should consider parole.

Mr. Pearson stated a lot of the facts were wrong and they will not believe him. He brought up his discharge he states it is in four to five years, so he stated he will just wait till then. He explained how he



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is on his death bed He then discusses other health issues. He states he can work, and he would prefer to be out without supervision. He then stated it is probably best parole is denied. He stated he was never indicted by the grand jury; his name was forged and states others committed felonies to put him in prison.

End of discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (KTUPY-KTISON). Motion prevailed with an 8-0 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Ms. Globokar, Mr. Grubbs, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison and Mr. Tupy. Mr. Heaton abstained from voting.

Motion to a three-year set (KTUPY-JBOHLAND). Motion prevailed with a 7-1 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison and Mr. Tupy. Mr. Grubbs dissented. Mr. Heaton abstained from voting.

After reviewing the 15 Statutory Factors and applying them to the evidence in this case, the Board decided that Mr. Dennis Pearson 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.”