



STATE OF ILLINOIS
 JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR
PRISONER REVIEW BOARD
 Craig Findley, Chairman

EN BANC MINUTE SHEET
OPEN SESSION—March 12, 2020

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at Room 400, State Capitol Building, 301 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 12, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following offenders:

C66348	ROY KING
C71613	DANNY LILLARD
C64310	AMENSEB B'NE RA
L10298	DWIGHT JOHNSON
C82430	SALIK ABDULLAH
C66263	EDWARD SPICER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Findley.

Roll call was taken by Recording Secretary Janet Crane.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mr. Daniel Brink	X	
Ms. Edith Crigler	X	
Ms. Lisa Daniels	X	
Mr. Salvador Diaz		X
Mr. Donald Wayne Dunn	X	
Mr. Pete Fisher		X
Ms. Vonetta Harris	X	
Mr. Oreal James	X	
Ms. Virginia Martinez	X	
Mrs. Aurthur Mae Perkins		X
Mr. Joseph Ruggiero	X	
Mr. Donald Shelton	X	
Mr. Ken Tupy		X
Ms. Eleanor Kaye Wilson	X	
Chairman Craig Findley	X	

11 Members Present

The Recording Secretary presented the December 12, 2019, Open Session Minutes for approval.



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Motion to approve Open Session Minutes from **December 12, 2019**. (DS—VM). Leave.

The case of Roy King was continued to the next *en banc* hearing date of the Board.

Motion to enter Closed Session to discuss confidential and privileged victims' statements in all remaining scheduled cases. (VH—DWD). Leave.

Motion to return to Open Session. (DS—VM). Leave.

The Board heard and voted upon the scheduled cases as detailed in the individual case minutes.

Meeting was adjourned (DWD—LD). Leave.



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OPEN SESSION—March 12, 2020

Inmate Name: **DANNY LILLARD**

IDOC Number: **C71613**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at Room 400, State Capitol Building, 301 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 12, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Danny Lillard C71613.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Danny Lillard C71613, age 67, was born on January 9, 1953 to Othello and Theotto Lillard. Mr. Lillard's parents birthed 9 children: 5 boys and 4 girls. Two brothers and one sister are now deceased. Mr. Lillard has never married nor does he have any children. Mr. Lillard was born in Danville, IL, where he lived all of his life. He completed his grade school and junior high school at North Ridge Junior High School and graduated from High School in 1968.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On December 3, 1976, Danny D. Lillard was arrested and brought into custody for the December 2, 1976, Murder of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Huffman. Mr. Lillard entered the dwelling of a gift shop named "Jo-Mar Rings and Things," located in Danville, IL, and owned by Mrs. Huffman. On December 3, 1976, around 10:00 p.m., Danny Lillard, then 23 years of age, gave a statement to Investigator Robert LeConte and Larry Rollins. Mr. Lillard was advised of his rights, with clarity and understanding and offered to give a statement of the incident with his own free will. Mr. Lillard related that upon leaving his home, with a pry bar in his hand, he walked across the street to Jo-Mar Rings and Things. He then asked Mrs. Huffman about some earrings on the shelf behind her. As she turned around to get them, he hit her in the head with the pry bar. Mr. Lillard stated that he asked her where she kept her money, at which point Mrs. Huffman walked over to the cash register and got the money out and put it in a bag. Next, Mr. Lillard told her to go to the back of the store. As the two walked back to the rear of the store, Mr. Lillard told her to sit down. As she sat down, she opened the desk drawer and stated that there was money in the drawer. Mrs. Huffman put the money in the same bag as the money from the register. After being given the money, Mr. Lillard reported that he started hitting her Mrs. Huffman, while she was facing him. She put up her arms to protect herself.

During the interview, Mr. Lillard was asked how many times he hit Mrs. Huffman and he stated that he just kept hitting and hitting her. He never dropped the pry bar while beating Mrs.



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Huffman. Mr. Lillard was asked the question, “Did Mrs. Huffman scream while being attacked?” and he stated, “No, she just moaned.” After Mr. Lillard finished the brutal and heinous beating of Mrs. Huffman, he looked around and noticed a CB radio, which he took and left the store. In his possession were a CB Radio, a bag of money (\$115.00), and the pry bar used to murder Mrs. Huffman. During the final phase of the interview, Mr. Lillard stated that he suffered from extreme headaches and that he used drugs, but that he had not used in the prior 4-5 months. He also stated that he felt that he had mental problems, because he could not identify why he did certain things. In fact, Mr. Lillard’s last statement during the interview was “I don’t know why I hurt that lady and I don’t know how many people I might hurt.”

On May 13, 1977, Circuit Court Judge James K. Robinson found Danny Lillard to be guilty of Armed Robbery and Murder. He was sentenced to 100–150 years for Murder and 10–30 years for Armed Robbery, with the sentences to run consecutively. Mr. Lillard’s Armed Robbery conviction was later vacated in 1979; Mr. Lillard is currently serving the sentence for the Murder conviction only.

MR. LILLARD’S STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

During Mr. Lillard’s youthful years, he admits to excessive use of alcohol and that he had a drinking problem. He also admits that he used a number of unlawful controlled substances including speed, THC (cannabis), cocaine, heroin, “Reds,” “Yellow Jackets,” acid (LSD) and MDA. Mr. Lillard advised that he had been drinking and using drugs prior to the commission of both previous burglaries. He also stated that after leaving Tinley Park to return to Danville in June 1976, he began using heroin and cocaine again.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

In the 42 years, of Mr. Lillard’s incarceration, he has received fewer than 30 disciplinary tickets. He has taken part in programming including Stress Management, Drug and Alcohol Anonymous, and Narcotics Anonymous. He has accumulated several college course credits and has worked in the fields of a laborer in several capacities. Since being transferred to Graham in 2018, he has been working in laundry, as a porter. He has also applied for enrollment in Anger Management. Mr. Lillard does not take any medication, exercises daily and has a pretty good sleeping pattern; he wakes up between 6–7 a.m. and retires to bed around 11:00 p.m.

He maintains good relationships with his family. His last visit was in 2019 from his brother. Mr. Lillard communicates often with his family through phone calls and letters.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Lillard has been accepted to St. Leonard’s House Ministries in Chicago, IL. At St. Leonard’s House, Mr. Lillard would be able to avail himself in substance abuse, case management, psychotherapy, recovery maintenance, and employment assistance programs. In



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addition to St. Leonard's House, Mr. Lillard has two sisters who are willing to give him full support, if granted parole and after he completes his program at St. Leonard's House. His sisters live in California and Georgia. One sister is a retired RN and the other is a retired military Sergeant First Class; both are willing to give their brother all the support needed to have a successful re-entry.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Board has received consistent opposition to release prior to every hearing at which Mr. Lillard has been considered for parole. The Vermillion County State's Attorney's Office has also consistently objected to the release of Mr. Lillard on parole.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Dunn asked how many years he had been incarcerated; Mr. Lillard had served 43 years as of the date of the hearing.

Ms. Harris indicated that she was initially against parole. She felt Mr. Lillard had left out some things. Ms. Harris noted that St. Leonard's house will give him the help he needs to transition and then he could transfer through the Interstate Compact to one of his siblings' homes outside of Illinois.

Mr. Shelton made reference to the statement made by Mr. Lillard regarding his not knowing how many people he would hurt. Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Lillard's father, when he was living, stated that he didn't want his son on the street. Mr. Shelton also highlighted that Mr. Lillard had stabbed another incarcerated person 5 years into his sentence. Mr. Lillard also talked about his offense and didn't know why he did it. Mr. Lillard indicated that he had 'treated himself' during the 2014 interview. He said the crime was drug related. Mr. Shelton stated that this was a brutal crime against a middle-aged woman who was no possible threat to Mr. Lillard. Mr. Shelton indicated that he cannot support parole.

Mr. Brink asked if Mr. Lillard is on any type of medication; he is not.

Mr. Lillard's representative, retired attorney Arden Lang, spoke in support of his parole. Ms. Lang and her client have no disputes over the facts of the case. Ms. Lang argued that Mr. Lillard is ready to go to St. Leonard's House, where they have a detailed plan for him. Ms. Lang noted that she understands Mr. Shelton's reservations, but also noted that Mr. Lillard has accepted his part in the crime, admitted his guilt, and is remorseful. Ms. Lang further noted that Mr. Lillard has strong family support, with two of his brothers present at the hearing. Two sisters have also offered to have him live with them after St. Leonard's. Mr. Lillard has indicated that he will accept whatever placement is deemed appropriate. Ms. Lang observed that Ms. Harris's



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assessment that problems came from drug addiction is very accurate. Ms. Lang concluded by noting that Mr. Lillard has had a well-adjusted life for many years in the institution.

Mr. Shelton questioned the suggestion Mr. Lillard is ready for parole.

Ms. Daniels asked Mr. Shelton if his concern is that Mr. Lillard will be a threat to society.

Board Members agreed that if Mr. Lillard is paroled, he should be prohibited from living in Vermillion County as a condition of his release.

Vermillion County State's Attorney Jacqueline Lacy spoke in protest of Mr. Lillard's parole. SA Lacy argued that Mr. Lillard takes no initiative for himself, noting that at the previous parole hearings, it was suggested that he formulate a parole plan, since he had none. SA Lacy stressed that the victim's family lives with this crime daily and asked the Board to consider the brutality of the crime. SA Lacy noted that Mr. Lillard states he still doesn't know why he committed the crime, questioning, therefore, how he could be a productive member of the community. SA Lacy also noted that Mr. Lillard has not addressed any mental health concerns.

Mr. Ruggiero spoke about the length of Mr. Lillard's sentence, noting that Mr. Lillard was given 100–150 years, which would indicate a minimum of 50 years to serve. Mr. Ruggiero noted that under today's sentencing laws, Mr. Lillard's offense would have a sentence with no possibility of parole.

Mr. Shelton reminded that Board that there have been many letters of protest from State officials on this case. Mr. Shelton observed that this crime affected this community deeply and they have not forgotten it.

The victim's daughter addressed the Board. She said she holds no hate or anger towards Mr. Lillard; so much time has passed and she has forgiven him. She noted that her frustration is with the legal system: the lengthy sentence Mr. Lillard was given promised her family that they would not have to worry or be concerned that Mr. Lillard would be paroled, and that the community would be safe. Since Mr. Lillard comes up for parole consideration on a regular basis, the crime is constantly brought back up to her family and the community. She feels this is trivializing a human life.

Ms. Martinez noted that St. Leonard's House would do an evaluation on Mr. Lillard, if he were to parole there.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (VH—DWD). Motion fails by a vote of 7–4. Parole is therefore denied as a matter of State law, due to the failure to receive votes in favor of parole release from a majority of the appointed Board Members. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, and Chairman Findley. Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, and Ms. Wilson dissented.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Lillard’s case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that a release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as parole release at this time would deprecate the serious nature of the offense and promote a lack of respect for the law.

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



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION—March 12, 2020

Inmate Name: **AMENSEB B'NE RA**

IDOC Number: **C64310**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at Room 400, State Capitol Building, 301 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 12, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Amenseb B'Ne Ra C64310.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Please note for purposes of clarity that Amenseb B'Ne Ra C64310 was originally convicted under the name "Larry Fulton" and is referred to as such in numerous documents associated with this case; the Board will refer to him throughout this document as Mr. B'Ne Ra.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Per the State's Attorney Protest Letter Dated May 23, 2018: On March 19, 1975, Bernard DiMeo, who worked for 23 years at Gunthrop-Warren Corporation, left work around noon and went to the Hartford Plaza Bank to cash checks for his fellow employees. Mr. DiMeo had been in the habit for the prior two years of cashing paychecks for employees on payday.

As Mr. DiMeo left the building, he met Thomas Dolce, who accompanied Mr. DiMeo to the bank. He cashed the checks and put the approximately \$5,500 in coins and currency in a blue envelope. He and Mr. Dolce then went back to the building at 123 N. Wacker, got on the elevator, and exited at the second floor.

As Mr. DiMeo stepped off the elevator, Mr. B'Ne Ra, who was armed with a loaded handgun, confronted Mr. DiMeo. Mr. B'Ne Ra put his hand on Mr. DiMeo's chest and said, "I'll take that." Mr. B'Ne Ra then grabbed the blue envelope containing the coins and currency from underneath Mr. DiMeo's arm. As Mr. B'Ne Ra grabbed the envelope, Mr. DiMeo's arm came up and hit Mr. B'Ne Ra's hand, which held the gun. Mr. B'Ne Ra fired the gun and shot Mr. DiMeo in the right forearm. Mr. Dolce, who was also in the hallway, stated "What's happening?" Mr. B'Ne Ra then turned and fired five shots at Mr. Dolce, striking him twice; Mr. Dolce was struck once in the upper left abdomen, with a second shot to the right chest, causing his death. Mr. B'Ne Ra then fled the building to a waiting, green 1968 Oldsmobile Cutlass.



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At trial, the evidence established that Donald Howard, an employee of Gunthorp-Warren Corporation, was Mr. B'Ne Ra's acquaintance; Mr. B'Ne Ra learned from Mr. Howard about Mr. DiMeo's custom of cashing payroll checks on that particular day of the week and at that particular time. In fact, Mr. DiMeo had cashed checks for Mr. Howard in the past.

On April 17, 1975, the police set up surveillance at the home of Mr. Howard. Police observed the 1968 Oldsmobile Cutlass arrive. They followed the Cutlass after it left Mr. Howard's home. Police stopped the car and Mr. B'Ne Ra, the driver of the Cutlass, was arrested. He initially denied any knowledge of the crime, but later claimed that he had loaned his car to Mr. Howard on the day of the crime. Mr. B'Ne Ra subsequently gave a written statement admitting to driving the car to the scene and dropping off two men at 123 Wacker at the request of Mr. Howard, who told Mr. B'Ne Ra that the men needed a ride to band practice. Mr. B'Ne Ra stated the men asked him to wait; 15–20 minutes later these two men came back. Mr. B'Ne Ra saw that both men had pistols and one man had a torn bag. Mr. B'Ne Ra stated that he dropped the men off and never saw them again. Mr. DiMeo identified Mr. B'Ne Ra in a lineup as the man who shot him and Mr. Dolce in the Robbery. At the time of the offense, Mr. B'Ne Ra had a pending case (Case No. 74-405) for Robbery.

The jury found Mr. B'Ne Ra guilty of the Murder of Mr. Dolce, the Attempt Murder of Mr. DiMeo, the Aggravated Battery of Mr. DiMeo, and Armed Robbery. Mr. B'Ne Ra was sentenced on December 17, 1976, to 100–300 years for Murder, 25–100 years for Attempt Murder, and 10–40 years for Armed Robbery, to be served concurrently. The Aggravated Battery conviction merged into the Attempt Murder conviction.

MR. B'NE RA'S STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSES

Mr. B'Ne Ra was pleasant and focused during his parole consideration interview. For the first time, he was represented by an attorney, who presented documentation in the petition suggesting the possibility that Mr. B'Ne Ra did not commit the offenses for which he is incarcerated. Mr. B'Ne Ra additionally reported that he was not involved in the offenses and was not present during the commission of the offenses.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. B'Ne Ra has not received a disciplinary ticket since April 2015 and has not been in segregation since 2010; he had 33 tickets between 2001 and April 2015. He did receive two tickets in 2019, for which he received a verbal reprimand and 1 month of C grade status. He currently participates in the Creative Arts program.



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PAROLE PLANS

Mr. B'Ne Ra's parole plan is to live in a structured and supported environment upon parole. He has been accepted into two potential parole sites of St Leonard's House and Bridge to Freedom. He also has the support of his sister, other family members, and friends.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Cook County Assistant States' Attorney spoke for the People against parole. He stated that the facts are clear, noting that Mr. B'Ne Ra gave a written statement concerning the car that was involved in the crime. The People argued that they believe Mr. B'Ne Ra has not accepted responsibility for his crimes.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Crigler noted that this face-to-face interview was the first time Mr. B'Ne Ra had spoken about the crime. Previously, he refused to speak to a Board Member, stating that he wanted to present his case before the entire Board.

Mr. Shelton asked about Mr. B'Ne Ra's tickets. Ms. Crigler explained that they were for Unauthorized Movement and Disobeying a Direct Order. Mr. Shelton asked Ms. Crigler if she had seen the actual letters written by other inmates in support of Mr. B'Ne Ra. Ms. Crigler said that she had, and that there were hard copies of the letters in the file.

Ms. Martinez commented that in the past Mr. B'Ne Ra only gave general information and refused to discuss the crimes, because he wanted to come before the entire Board. In addition, he had no concrete parole plan, was angry, and didn't trust the system. Ms. Martinez observed that now that he has an attorney that he feels he can trust, he has opened up and talked about the case.

Mr. Ruggiero asked Ms. Crigler what Mr. B'Ne Ra stated was his involvement in the Robbery and Murder. Ms. Crigler said Mr. B'Ne Ra stated that he had no involvement in the crimes and that he wasn't there.

Mr. B'Ne Ra's attorney, Jennifer Soble, spoke on his behalf. Ms. Soble pointed out that after one month of police surveillance, Mr. B'Ne Ra was arrested. He was not identified by anyone in the police lineup. Ms. Soble noted that the man that police felt was the accomplice, Mr. Howard, was never prosecuted. Mr. B'Ne Ra's family is very civic-minded, and he is actively involved in mentoring and sharing in the institution. Chairman Findley noted that the parole petition on Mr. B'Ne Ra's behalf was highly detailed in nature, and complimented Ms. Soble on her representation of Mr. B'Ne Ra.



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Mr. B'Ne Ra's sister said that she and the rest of Mr. B'Ne Ra's family are hoping and praying for his release.

Mr. Ruggiero asked whether Mr. B'Ne Ra's written statement was included at trial. Ms. Soble said it was not; she additionally noted that Mr. B'Ne Ra did not testify.

Mr. Brink asked for clarification as to whether Mr. B'Ne Ra was still denying having committed the offenses after 45 years. Ms. Crigler said that Mr. B'Ne Ra continues to maintain his innocence as to the offenses.

Ms. Soble talked about how she had to build a trust with Mr. B'Ne Ra, observing that he took a while and several visits to open up about the offenses. Ms. Soble reported that Mr. B'Ne Ra talked about his relationships with younger inmates and how he tries to mentor them. Ms. Soble also noted that Mr. B'Ne Ra is a deeply religious man.

Ms. Crigler says Mr. B'Ne Ra is not angry like many other individuals that Board Members sometimes see; instead, Mr. B'Ne Ra is distrustful of the system.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (EC—LD). Motion passes by a vote of 10–1. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley. Mr. Ruggiero dissented.

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

“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 12, 2020

Inmate Name: **DWIGHT JOHNSON**

IDOC Number: **L10298**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at Room 400, State Capitol Building, 301 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 12, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Dwight Johnson L10298.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Dwight Johnson L10298, was interviewed at Dixon Correctional Center on December 5, 2019. Present for the interview by Board Member Oreal James were Mr. Johnson and his attorneys, Pete Sgro and Eric Castaneda. Mr. Johnson is now 66-years old and is serving a sentence of 100–200 years for Murder and Armed Robbery.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On October 18, 1977, Mr. Johnson and his brother entered a grocery store to commit a Robbery. They made the owner and two customers lie down behind the meat counter. The victim, Flo Pitchford, then entered the store to purchase a newspaper, unaware of the Robbery that was then in progress. She was also told to lie down on the floor. As Mr. Johnson was leaving the store, he turned and shot Ms. Pitchford in the head, killing her.

Mr. Johnson was not arrested until a year later, when Chicago Police went to Cook County Jail to interview Fred Johnson, Mr. Johnson's brother. While the police were waiting to speak with Fred Johnson, Mr. Johnson arrived to visit his brother. Mr. Johnson was confronted by police officers, at which point Mr. Johnson acknowledged to them that his nickname was "Ike"; Mr. Johnson was then taken into custody.

MR. JOHNSON'S STATEMENTS REGARDING THE OFFENSES

Mr. Johnson initially denied involvement in the Robbery and Murder. When confronted with evidence (his fingerprint), he admitted he was involved in the Robbery, but denied killing



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the victim. Mr. Johnson now admits that he shot the gun. Furthermore, Mr. Johnson takes full responsibility for his actions and gives reason to believe he is truly remorseful.

Mr. Johnson said his brothers were all in on the Robbery, but only Mr. Johnson fired a gun. He stated that he was not aware until one year later that someone was shot. He said he would never intentionally shoot anyone. Mr. Johnson also stated that he takes all responsibility for what happened. Mr. Johnson reported that at first he wanted to say the prints on the bottle were his brother's, because he could not recall having a soda pop on that day.

Mr. Johnson stated he is a changed person, which he indicates is the reason why he is willing to accept all responsibility for what happened in the store that day and no longer attempts to mitigate his actions of that day.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Johnson has been housed at three different Illinois Correctional Facilities: Stateville (1981- 1997), Western (1997-2004), and Danville (2004-Current). He is currently on A grade status at Danville Correctional Center.

Most of Mr. Johnson's disciplinary tickets are from Stateville; all are within the first few years of his incarceration. From 1981–1989, he accumulated 21 major and 28 minor tickets. He received a major ticket in 1991 for having six pieces of metal in his cell. Since that time, Mr. Johnson has done well, receiving only two major tickets since 2000.

Mr. Johnson has not attempted to get his GED and states he does not want to get his GED while incarcerated, as it would not mean anything to him. He did say that if he was to obtain his parole, he would plan on getting his GED.

Mr. Johnson has maintained a solid work history while incarcerated and states he works as much as possible. Mr. Johnson stated that his greatest accomplishment is becoming an accomplished tailor, which enabled him to send support to his children and back to his home.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Johnson's current parole plan is to live at St Leonard's House, with the support of his sister, Alma Johnson. Mr. Johnson stated that he would be willing to comply with any conditions requested of him. Mr. Johnson also indicated that he desires to work as a tailor, but will also pursue custodial work, similar to what he did while incarcerated.



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DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Ruggiero noted that until 2013, Mr. Johnson said it was a false confession.

Mr. Shelton said he did not support parole previously; he feels Mr. Johnson is a follower and did not make intelligent choices. Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Johnson cannot dispute the fact that his fingerprints were found at the crime scene.

Mr. Brink asked if there were any other arrests during the year before Mr. Johnson was arrested. None were noted.

Ms. Martinez noted that Mr. Johnson's tailoring skills will ensure that he has a job.

Mr. Johnson's attorney, Mr. Sgro, stated that Mr. Johnson had a reluctance to take responsibility previously, but Mr. Sgro noted that Mr. Johnson has matured. Mr. Sgro observed that Mr. Johnson is somewhat closed off, possibly even somewhat depressed. When Mr. Johnson talks about his work however, he lights up. Mr. Sgro stated that St. Leonard's House will be able to help with Mr. Johnson getting ID and then getting a job.

Mr. Ruggiero questioned Mr. Johnson's intent when shooting the gun at the victim.

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office briefly stated the People's opposition to parole and stood on their letter of protest. There were no questions of the ASA.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (OJ—LD). Motion prevails by a vote of 10—1. Parole is granted. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley. Mr. Ruggiero dissented.

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

"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 12, 2020

Inmate Name: **SALIK ABDULLAH**

IDOC Number: **C82430**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at Room 400, State Capitol Building, 301 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 12, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Salik Abdullah C82430.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On September 23, 1977, Salik Abdullah C82430, then known as “Theodore Bruce Parsons” and 20 years of age, along with Robert Kirkpatrick (age 28) and Jerry Gleckler (age 34) decided to rob a bank. In preparation for the bank robbery, they burglarized the home of a friend of Gleckler’s and stole 3 shotguns. They met the next day and sawed off the barrels of the shotguns. Mr. Abdullah and Mr. Kirkpatrick then drove to a gas station in Danville, where they robbed the business of \$200. The attendant, Curtis Smith, offered no resistance and complied with all demands. Mr. Abdullah shot Mr. Smith from close range, striking him in the neck, shoulder, and head. Mr. Smith survived the shooting, but was paralyzed for life.

The following day, Mr. Abdullah and his two co-offenders met and decided to steal a vehicle, to avoid using Mr. Abdullah’s car in the planned bank robbery. They drove to the Lake of the Woods Liquor Store in Champaign County, where they waited for a car to steal.

The two victims, Mr. Harris (age 19) and Mr. Simmons (age 18) drove into the liquor store parking lot in Mr. Harris’s Plymouth Satellite. They purchased beer and exited the lot, followed by the three offenders in Mr. Abdullah’s automobile. After following the victims to a county road, the offenders forced the Plymouth to pull over.

Mr. Abdullah and Mr. Gleckler, armed with shotguns, stepped out of the car and ordered the two victims to exit their vehicle. The two offenders ordered the victims to face a cornfield, and Mr. Abdullah shot Mr. Harris and Mr. Simmons in the back. After the victims fell to the ground, Mr. Gleckler fired an additional round from a shotgun into the skull of each of the victims. A pathologist would later testify that the victims had “little or no skull or brain tissue left.”



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Mr. Abdullah was arrested by Danville Police on September 27, 1977, in connection with the gas station Robbery. The gas station attendant had given the police a description of Mr. Abdullah's car, which had damage to the front end. Mr. Abdullah then admitted his role and then gave the police information about the Murders of the two young men in Champaign County, as well as the names of his two co-offenders.

Mr. Abdullah pled guilty in the Attempt Murder and Armed Robbery in Vermilion County. In Champaign County, a guilty verdict was entered on August 7, 1978, and Mr. Abdullah was sentenced to 500–1000 years for each Murder, to be served concurrently to one another, but consecutively to the Vermilion County sentences of 30 years for Armed Robbery and 30 years for Attempt Murder, which themselves were to run concurrently. Mr. Abdullah has never appealed nor filed any post-conviction motions.

Mr. Gleckler originally was sentenced to Death. In a statement filed by the State's Attorney of Champaign County at the time, there was information that Mr. Abdullah was facing threats, due to his having given the police statements about the involvement of the two co-defendants. In fact, Mr. Kirkpatrick sent a letter to Mr. Gleckler, saying that if Mr. Abdullah didn't get the Death penalty, Mr. Kirkpatrick would have Mr. Abdullah killed. That same statement from the State's Attorney includes comments made by the judge at sentencing that "[Mr. Abdullah] should never again be released to prey upon his fellow man" and also found "not one thing – not a single thing to mitigate the crimes which [Mr. Abdullah] committed."

MR. ABDULLAH'S STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSES

Mr. Abdullah was calm and cooperative during the interview. He was intelligent and was willing to answer all of the interviewer's questions.

As he has in the past, Mr. Abdullah admitted his role in the Robbery and shooting at the gas station, as well as the Murders of the two young men. Mr. Abdullah generally confirmed the official statement of facts and added additional information as follows: he stated that he planned to hit the station attendant – not to shoot – but the victim turned, and somehow the shotgun went off. He said that when they pulled the two young men over to steal their car, Mr. Abdullah noticed that he hadn't pulled his ski cap down and that his license plate was visible. He stated that he shot one of the young men in the shoulder and the other in the back. Mr. Gleckler then came and shot both of the boys in the head. Mr. Abdullah was arrested when the gas station attendant recognized crash damage on the front end of his car. He was identified via the car and taken into custody, at which point Mr. Abdullah told the police everything and identified the two co-defendants.

Mr. Abdullah stated that he called his mother from the jail; she screamed and dropped the phone when he told her he had been arrested for Murder. He still remembers that scream and reports that he understood then what he had done to her and to the mothers of the two victims.



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Mr. Abdullah says that he met Mr. Gleckler and Mr. Kirkpatrick while he was at Harmony House for inpatient treatment as a result of a DUI. Mr. Abdullah was 20 at the time, while Mr. Gleckler was 34 and Mr. Kirkpatrick was 28. Mr. Abdullah believes he gravitated to older men because he needed a father figure. At the time, he reported that he was also drinking and taking Valium.

Mr. Abdullah takes full responsibility for what he did and is remorseful for what he did. He never appealed his case nor filed post-conviction motions, because he knew he had committed the crimes for which he was convicted.

Mr. Abdullah was open in his responses to questions and appears to be sincere in his remorse. He displayed some difficulty in getting around and indicated that he was also still recovering from his shoulder surgery.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Abdullah had a prior conviction in 1976 for Grand Theft in California. He was sentenced to 3 years of probation and 6 months in jail; his jail time for that offense was ultimately waived, based on his agreement to testify against two alleged murderers in the Anaheim jail, where he had been held and allegedly sexually assaulted. The original charges were for Aggravated Kidnapping and Armed Robbery in a "dope burn." Mr. Abdullah had recruited a juvenile to help him kidnap two individuals and steal \$1000 at gunpoint. When the two victims were released, Mr. Abdullah allegedly ordered his co-defendant to shoot them, but the juvenile refused.

Mr. Abdullah fled California before ever testifying (as had been part of his plea agreement). A warrant for violation of probation was quashed when the State of California learned that Mr. Abdullah was in Illinois and would not be returning, due to the pending charges in the instant case.

Review of Mr. Abdullah's juvenile history also included an additional record.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Abdullah does not have children or a spouse. He has brothers with whom he does not have contact. He does, however, keep close contact with his sister, who has written letters of support and is willing to help him should he be paroled.

Mr. Abdullah has had an exceptional institutional adjustment. He had a very traumatic experience in Stateville that caused night terrors. He had not believed in God, but asked God to help him. Mr. Abdullah then started searching for a religion to study and began studying every religion about which he could find information. Among other religious studies, he has completed 8 years of study of Buddhism and has earned 8 certificates from the Bible Academy. He said he



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was drawn to religions that teach non-violence. He concentrated on the Quran and taught himself Arabic in order to continue his study. It was during this process that he legally changed his name from Theodore Bruce Parsons to his Muslim name, Salik Abdullah.

Mr. Abdullah has accumulated 383 college credits, after first earning his GED in prison. He never completed his senior thesis for two bachelor's degrees, because doing so would have prevented him from being able to take any more courses. Mr. Abdullah was accepted to a PhD program, but didn't have the money to pursue it.

Mr. Abdullah is a religious leader and provides spiritual guidance to other incarcerated persons. He provides messages of non-violence through weekly sermons and encourages other incarcerated individuals to use non-violent methods of conflict resolution. Several letters from fellow IDOC residents speak to his role as a calming and helpful influence.

Mr. Abdullah has had a number of jobs in prison and has been given significant responsibility, including superintendent's clerk and ambulatory aid for another incarcerated individual. Mr. Abdullah is not currently working due to his significant health issues.

With regard to Inmate Disciplinary Reports, Mr. Abdullah has had 11 major tickets since 1998, including one for Assaulting a Staff Member in 2005. He explained that he had high blood pressure and was given a pill by a nurse. Mr. Abdullah explained that he takes 8 pills a day, told the staff he needed more, and then threw the pill at the trash can. The Correctional Officer told him to take his meds, but Mr. Abdullah threw the pill again, at which point the officer said he had been assaulted. Mr. Abdullah doesn't think the pill even hit the correctional officer, but Mr. Abdullah was given a ticket for Assault. Mr. Abdullah reports that he was not allowed to call witnesses who were watching the incident. Notably, he is – and was at that time – legally blind, using a white cane to assist while walking.

In 2007, while housed at Lawrence Correctional Center, Mr. Abdullah was given a ticket for Refusing Housing. He said that he was being housed in cells with younger men, including white nationalists. In 2012, while at Pinckneyville, he was given a ticket for Fighting. Mr. Abdullah stated that he was put in a cell with a man with mental illness, who had previously been convicted of killing someone in prison. Mr. Abdullah's cellmate started a fight with Mr. Abdullah, and he defended himself. Mr. Abdullah stated that his religious practice prevents him from fighting, so he asked for a transfer. He has had no problems at Dixon since he was transferred in June 2017, except for a minor ticket for Unauthorized Property, which was a fan that he had bought from another IDOC resident.

Mr. Abdullah is currently classified as A grade status, minimum security. His last SPIN Assessment indicates that he is low risk.



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PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Abdullah has been accepted at St. Leonard's Ministries. He will be provided housing as well as re-entry services, including vocational and employment assistance. Because of his current health status, he will be applying for Social Security Disability. Once he leaves St. Leonard's, his sister Dana will fly in to help him find an apartment and provide financial assistance.

Mr. Abdullah also has plans to create an online business to provide incarcerated persons with access to various products. Currently, those individuals have access to a very limited amount of merchandise that they can purchase as gifts for family members. Mr. Abdullah hopes to provide additional choices to them.

EN BANC HISTORY

In 2019, Mr. Abdullah received 6 votes in favor of granting parole. Prior to that hearing, he had received no votes. Mr. Abdullah had a 5-year set immediately prior to last year's hearing and several 3-year sets before then.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

There is a strong letter in opposition to parole from the Champaign County State's Attorney, which includes reference to the statement by the sentencing judge that "I believe it is correct that the Court must make a clear statement to those who would review this matter in time and, by the sentence of the trial court, I believe it should be indicated to the persons who will review this at some future date by way of parole that they should perhaps read the record of the case...and very possibly the response of anyone who would read this record would be: 'Not now – And not ever.'"

There are also letters of protest from family members of the victims, which were included in the Board's materials.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Abdullah puts a lot of time into his religious studies. Mr. Abdullah initially blamed his criminal actions on his addiction to Valium.

Ms. Harris asked about the 2005 Assault ticket. Ms. Martinez indicated that ticket was when Mr. Abdullah threw a medicine blister pack at the trash can; Mr. Abdullah reported that he does not think the blister pack hit the officer.



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Mr. Brink asked if Mr. Abdullah had a history of gang activity. No gang affiliation was noted, and Ms. Martinez noted that Mr. Abdullah stated that his ticket for Refusing Housing was to avoid inmates with gang affiliations.

Mr. Ruggiero noted that he doesn't dispute the validity of Mr. Abdullah's religious sincerity, or that Mr. Abdullah's institutional adjustment is very good. Mr. Ruggiero indicated that his issue lies with the nature of the crime being so brutal and that worse crimes are rarely seen. Mr. Ruggiero observed that transcripts from the trial indicated that both defendants shot the victims.

Mr. Brink asked about the shooting. Ms. Martinez indicated that Mr. Abdullah stated that he shot the victim in the back and shoulder, while his co-defendant shot them in the head.

Mr. Abdullah's attorneys, Miriam Sierig and Tiffany Green, appeared on his behalf. Ms. Sierig stated that since Mr. Abdullah was so young at the time of the crime (age 20) he had a good chance to rehabilitate in the prison system. Ms. Sierig observed that, in his 43 years in the prison system, Mr. Abdullah has used his time to study religion and take college classes. Ms. Sierig further emphasized Mr. Abdullah's sincerity in his religious beliefs and practices. Mr. Abdullah's attorneys noted that his health is a struggle for him. Nevertheless, they argued that the seriousness and commitment with which he takes life would prevent him from being a danger to society, were he to be granted parole release. Ms. Sierig noted that in crimes of this nature, it is rare that appeals are not filed. Mr. Abdullah accepts guilt for his crime and has spent the majority of his life in prison for it.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (VM—LD). Motion fails by a vote of 7–4. Members voting in favor of the motion were Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley. Mr. Brink, Ms. Harris, Mr. Ruggiero, and Mr. Shelton dissented.

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

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



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION—March 12, 2020

Inmate Name: **EDWARD SPICER** IDOC Number: **C66263**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at Room 400, State Capitol Building, 301 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois, on March 12, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Edward Spicer C66263.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Harris, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Edward Spicer C66263 was docketed for an interview on January 15, 2020, at Lawrence Correctional Center for parole consideration, but he refused, politely, to be interviewed by the Board. Mr. Spicer is 69 years old and has been in the continuous custody of the Illinois Department of Corrections for 43 years.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On November 10, 1975, Mr. Spicer and co-offender Earl Good, having armed themselves with handguns, committed Armed Robbery and Murder at Wonder Inn, a tavern on North Pulaski in Chicago. During the course of the Robbery, three victims were forced to line up against a wall and their wallets were taken. The victims were the tavern's co-owners, Prince Humphries and Herman Humphries, and a caretaker named Otto Kamtke. The victims were then forced to a bedroom at the rear of the establishment and made to lie face-down on a bed.

While co-offender Mr. Good searched the business for money, Mr. Spicer held the victims at gunpoint. At that same time a Schlitz delivery driver arrived at the business, was let in by co-offender Mr. Good, and was then made to lie on the floor near the other victims.

All four victims were shot. The two co-owners suffered gunshot wounds to the head and were pronounced dead at the hospital. The caretaker survived a gunshot to the head, later identifying Mr. Good and Mr. Spicer. The delivery driver survived a gunshot to the shoulder and identified Mr. Good as the offender who let him into the business. Mr. Spicer ultimately pled guilty to these crimes and was sentenced to a term of 25–45 years.

Five days later, on November 10, 1975, Mr. Spicer and Mr. Good committed Armed Robbery and Murder at Leading Food Store in East St. Louis. When the proprietors of the business, Ben Siegel and Emanuel Ukman, arrived in the morning, Mr. Spicer and Mr. Good



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entered the business with them. A third co-offender, James Phillips, waited nearby in a getaway car. Mr. Phillips was later described by a witness as “elderly.” After robbing the business of money, Mr. Spicer and Mr. Good shot and killed both victims.

One of the Leading Food Store victims died instantly, from two shots to the back of his head, but the other victim, who had been shot in the temple, survived long enough to plead for help and then get to a telephone that began to ring. He died before he could speak into the telephone. The caller, as it turns out, was a neighbor, who called the store after noticing suspicious activity there. The neighbor, testifying later at Mr. Spicer’s trial, said that upon calling the store he heard the telephone on the other end of the call get knocked off the hook.

Police Officer Bruce Moore, arriving to the store, was shot in the neck, seriously wounding him. Officer Moore was dispatched to the store because, unbeknownst to the offenders, there was an audio surveillance system in place inside the business, which was being monitored and recorded. When suspicious activity inside the store was heard at the monitoring station – activity that included the sound of the owners begging or fighting for their lives – police were called.

A passing motorist, Thomas McAleenan, saw Officer Moore outside the business with his gun drawn and heard shots fired as he drove by. Mr. McAleenan was able to report the license plate numbers to police. A check of the registration led police to the car owner, Lorraine Dixon, who reported the permitted use of her car by co-offender Mr. Phillips. All three co-offenders were present when police approached the apartment of Mr. Phillips, but Mr. Spicer and Mr. Good escaped. Mr. Phillips was apprehended at that time, and evidence was recovered.

On December 10, 1975, Mr. Spicer was arrested in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Following an interview by two Assistant State’s Attorneys from Cook County and his subsequent confession, he was extradited back to Illinois. Ultimately, he was sentenced to 25–45 years on the Cook County case and 200–400 years following his conviction in the St. Clair County case.

Mr. Spicer has additionally been implicated in a previous Murder, occurring as a result of what would currently be considered a Home Invasion, from October 7, 1975, in Chicago. In that case, which also involved co-offender Mr. Good, the offenders used a glasscutter to effect entry into the home of 73-year-old James Fitzpatrick and his 76-year-old sister Zaidee Lopez. Both victims were blind. Co-offender Mr. Good’s latent fingerprints were recovered from the window where entry was gained. The home was ransacked and cash was taken. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was pistol-whipped, later died with a skull fracture and brain injury

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Spicer’s criminal history is lengthy and troubling, including several Robberies and Burglary. He has been charged 10 times with either Rape or Deviate Sexual Assault, resulting in five convictions. His last two convictions prior to the current Murder convictions were for Rape.



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At the time of his Murder and Robbery arrests in the instant case, Mr. Spicer was on parole for the Rape of his father's common-law wife.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Spicer's institutional discipline record includes sanctions for Sexual Misconduct. Thirteen days after being returned to Department of Corrections custody in 1976 as a parole violator at age 26, he was sanctioned for Pressuring Others to Engage in Sexual Activity. At age 39, he was sanctioned for Aiding & Abetting; Attempted Solicitation or Conspiracy to Commit Sexual Misconduct; Bribery & Extortion; and Intimidation & Threats. At age 48, he was sanctioned for Aiding & Abetting a Sexual Assault.

According to institutional records, Mr. Spicer is additionally considered to be a high-ranking gang leader.

The SPIN Assessment conducted by the Department of Corrections finds Mr. Spicer to be a high risk overall to recidivate.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Spicer is reported to have spoken to IDOC staff about his desire to go to a halfway house. No other reference to a parole plan is made, owing to Mr. Spicer's refusal to be interviewed by the Board.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Spicer has multiple charges of Rape and Armed Robbery, along with Deviant Sexual Assault, and that one of his Rape victims was his father's common law wife. Mr. Shelton observed that Mr. Spicer is considered a predator by the institution. Mr. Shelton also reported that Mr. Spicer has had tickets for Sexual Assault and Misconduct and for Fighting as recently as 2010. Mr. Spicer participates in Muslim services. He has no known health issues. Mr. Shelton observed that Mr. Spicer attempted to renounce gang affiliation, but that the renunciation was not accepted as genuine, due to IDOC intelligence.

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office spoke on behalf of the People in protest of parole. The People noted that Mr. Spicer's case was denied by the Supreme Court in 1980, and that Mr. Spicer has a lengthy history of criminal sexual behavior. The People asked that parole be denied, as Mr. Spicer is a threat to society.



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Chairman Findley noted that if parole is granted, the Attorney General's Office would likely request a 90-day stay of parole release, in order to determine whether Mr. Spicer would qualify for Sexually Violent Person status.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (DS—JR). Motion prevails by a vote of 11–0.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Spicer's case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that a release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Spicer would not conform to reasonable conditions of parole, that parole release would have an adverse effect upon institutional discipline, and that parole release at this time would deprecate the serious nature of the offenses and promote a lack of respect for the law.

Motion for a 3-year set (JR—DS). Motion fails by a vote of 4–7. Members voting in favor of the 3-year set were Mr. Brink, Ms. Harris, Mr. Ruggiero, and Mr. Shelton. Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley dissented.

"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."