



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

**EN BANC MINUTE SHEET**  
**OPEN SESSION—September 24, 2020**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on September 24, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following offenders:

<b>T76635</b>	<b>JAMES BLOTTIAUX</b>
<b>C71613</b>	<b>DANNY LILLARD</b>
<b>C50335</b>	<b>SIDNEY FOSTER</b>
<b>C83885</b>	<b>ROGER TOLEFREE</b>
<b>C80186</b>	<b>RONNIE CARRASQUILLO</b>

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Findley.

Roll call was taken by Recording Secretary Janet Crane.

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>PRESENT</u></b>	<b><u>ABSENT</u></b>
Mr. Daniel Brink	X	
Ms. Edith Crigler	X	
Ms. Lisa Daniels	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	

13 Members Present

The Recording Secretary presented the August 26 & 27, 2020, Open Session Minutes for approval.

Motion to approve Open Session Minutes from **August 26 & 27, 2020**. (KT—EC). Leave.



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The Board heard and voted upon the cases of James Blottiaux, Danny Lillard, Sidney Foster, Roger Tolefree, and Ronnie Carrasquillo, as detailed in the individual case minutes.

Meeting was adjourned (JR—CF). Leave.



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**  
**OPEN SESSION—September 24, 2020**

Inmate Name: **JAMES BLOTTIAUX**

IDOC Number: **T76635**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on September 24, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for James Blottiaux T76635.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fisher, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

**PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE**

James Blottiaux T76635 was interviewed live via video from Dixon Correctional Center on August 13, 2020. Mr. Blottiaux's attorney, Jennifer Soble, also participated in the interview. Mr. Blottiaux appeared well-groomed, alert and oriented to time, place, and circumstance. He was polite. He did have difficulty hearing at times, but all his comments were logical, and he was appropriately responsive to questions.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

On June 14, 1965, Mr. Blottiaux was 21 years old and working odd jobs for a man named Silas Jayne. Silas Jayne owned Idle Hours Stables in Chicago's Northwest suburbs. Silas Jayne also had a brother, George Jayne. The two brothers, Silas and George, were engaged in a long-time bitter family feud related to their competing horse stables in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. It should be noted that Silas Jayne has been implicated in multiple attempts to have his brother George killed. George was in fact murdered October 28, 1970.

Silas Jayne offered Mr. Blottiaux \$10,000.00 to kill George. Mr. Blottiaux had a 1963 conviction for possessing explosives and agreed to plant a bomb in George Jayne's car. Prior to the Murder, Blottiaux obtained dynamite and blasting caps. He practiced with the devices to make sure they worked. This was a cold, calculated, and premediated contracted Murder for Hire.

On June 13, 1965, Mr. Blottiaux planted the bomb in his intended victim's car, which was located at George Jayne's Tri Color horse stable. The next day, June 14, 1965, Cheryl "Cherie" Rude, a 22-year-old Championship Equestrian, was working at the Tri Color horse stable. After lunch, George Jayne asked Ms. Rude to take his Cadillac to complete an errand. When she attempted to start the car, it exploded, ending her life in a horrifying manner.



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Mr. Blottiaux lived free for approximately 32 years after this offense and was not charged until 1997; he was convicted in 1999. The Official Statement of Facts from the prosecutor include statements Mr. Blottiaux made to several people that “sometimes the innocent have to suffer with the guilty.” The Statement of Facts also point out that at the time of sentencing, the judge stated that Mr. Blottiaux “escaped the hangman’s noose,” but that he should not escape punishment for what he has done.

MR. BLOTTIUX’S STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Blottiaux was asked about his relationship with Silas Jayne. Mr. Blottiaux indicated he attended public high school at Morgan Park, on the Southside of Chicago, until he was approximately 15 years old. He said he left at that time partly because his father had died and the family needed money and partly because he felt like dropping out. Mr. Blottiaux went to work for Silas Jayne at that time and worked part-time for him on and off until his early twenties. The criminal nature of Silas Jayne was discussed and acknowledged.

Mr. Blottiaux continues to express remorse for killing Ms. Rude. He indicated the motive of this entire case originated with Silas Jayne’s desire to kill his brother. Mr. Blottiaux agreed to commit the offense, because of the amount of money offered, and because he was 21 years old, had a baby, had another child on the way, and was desperate for money.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Blottiaux did go back to Morgan Park High School but did not graduate, as his girlfriend (later wife) became pregnant with his first child, and he had to drop out again to make money. He never graduated high school. He went to work for American Can for about a year and a half. He had a few jobs, and then he and his wife lived in Blue Island for about ten years. They lived in Palos Heights for a couple of years, then bought a house in Beverly. The family lived there for twelve years, before moving to another house in Beverly. Mr. Blottiaux lived there until his arrest in 1999. Mr. Blottiaux’s children went to school in Chicago, until he divorced his wife and took the boys to Florida to attend high school.

Mr. Blottiaux has kept himself busy while incarcerated. He has never received a disciplinary ticket. He completed a 750-hour vocational training program, which included bricklaying and construction. When asked why he took this course in 2007-2008, he stated “for something to do.” Mr. Blottiaux worked in the carpenter shop in 2009; in Galesburg, at Hill Correctional Center, he worked in the kitchen, on the grounds, and the commissary. He mentioned the commissary job is normally limited to one year, but he was allowed an extension. He was supposed to start working in sanitation in Dixon, but reported that he was laid off before he started because of COVID 19.



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### PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Blottiaux plans to live with his daughter in the house that he owns in Chicago. He has earned social security and will receive those benefits. He still desires to work in the auto body industry if he is paroled. At his age, he can't work on the cars, but he can run the business end of it and do estimates.

Mr. Blottiaux has two sons, who live in Florida, and two daughters, who live in Illinois. Mr. Blottiaux's daughter lives on the Southwest side of Chicago in Mr. Blottiaux's old house; he plans to live with her if paroled.

### OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Cook County Assistant State's Attorney Arienne Jones spoke for the People against parole. They pointed out the cold, calculated premeditation involved in the offense, in addition to the exceptionally brutal and heinous nature of this Murder, as well as the lack of actual time served by Mr. Blottiaux as a result of his remaining uncaught for over two decades.

### DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Martinez asked about the Board hearing 2017, where it was noted that Mr. Blottiaux saw the young woman get into the car instead of the intended victim, Mr. Jayne, and noted that Mr. Blottiaux could have prevented her death. Mr. Ruggiero agreed that that was true, observing that Mr. Blottiaux did nothing to warn Ms. Rude.

Mr. Fisher asked if Mr. Blottiaux was a suspect in the original investigation. It was unknown whether or not he was considered a suspect at the time. His conviction came about after the investigation into George Jayne by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

Mr. Dunn asked how many years would be considered enough time served for this crime.

Ms. Crigler asked about the investigation in 1965. It was noted that Mr. Blottiaux remained a free man until December 1997, at which time he was charged with the Murder of Ms. Rude.

Ms. Daniels asked Mr. Ruggiero if it was his belief that Mr. Blottiaux had not served enough time yet, and, if so, how much time was enough. Mr. Ruggiero said he doesn't feel enough time has been served for the severity of this crime, but doesn't feel that it's his job to determine how much time should be served. Mr. Brink noted that the victim's family doesn't feel that Mr. Blottiaux has served enough time.



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Ms. Daniels noted Mr. Blottiaux's 34-year incarceration without incident or ticket.

Mr. Blottiaux's attorney, Ms. Soble, spoke on his behalf. She described for the Board the character of Silas Jayne, and how Mr. Blottiaux had become involved with him at age 15 after his own father had died. Mr. Blottiaux became a father at age 17 and needed a steady job to support his young family. Ms. Soble said Mr. Blottiaux was interviewed by the bomb and arson unit at the time of the crime. Ms. Soble told the Board how Mr. Blottiaux had built a successful auto body business, which is still in existence, and how he volunteered to coach for his children's sporting teams as they were growing up.

Mr. Blottiaux's daughter also spoke on his behalf. She stressed to the Board that the 34 years that Mr. Blottiaux was not incarcerated after the crime was committed were not 'free'. She felt that he was constantly watching behind his back and hyper-vigilant. Mr. Blottiaux's daughter said that she had not written a letter in support of release for previous hearings, because she felt bad for the victim's family, and because she felt that her father was not ready for parole. Now she feels that he is ready and has done enough time.

Mr. Brink mentioned the victim's strong protest, which was provided to the Board Members.

Mr. Tupy asked if there was any indication that the victim and Mr. Blottiaux knew each other. There was no indication that they did.

Ms. Soble stated that, due to COVID-19, this may be the last time Mr. Blottiaux could be considered for parole, noting that his underlying health conditions and age place him at risk.

ASA Jones spoke on behalf of the People against parole. She noted that Mr. Blottiaux watched as Ms. Rude walked to and got into the car that exploded, but did nothing to stop her. The length of time from when the crime was committed, until charges were brought against Mr. Blottiaux, was 32 years, 6 months, and 3 days – during which time the victim's family was denied closure and justice. Mr. Blottiaux was able to have children and a family, which were denied his victim. ASA Jones also noted that 22 years served is only 2 years over the minimum sentence, and argued for continued incarceration for Mr. Blottiaux.

Chairman Findley remembered Mr. Blottiaux's statement at his first parole eligibility hearing: "I didn't want to get caught. I'm glad it's over."



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**DECISION AND RATIONALE**

Motion to deny parole (JR—PF). Motion prevails by a vote of 7–6. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Brink, Mr. Fisher, Ms. Martinez, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, and Chairman Findley. Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. James, Mrs. Perkins, and Ms. Wilson dissented.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Blottiaux’s case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as it 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—September 24, 2020**

Inmate Name: **DANNY LILLARD**

IDOC Number: **C71613**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on September 24, 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, Mr. Fisher, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

**PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE**

On August 18, 2020, Danny Lillard C71613 was interviewed via video conference from Graham Correctional Center. His attorney, Ms. Arden Lang, was present at his interview. Mr. Lillard was very cooperative and engaging throughout the interview.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

On December 3, 1976, Mr. 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, Illinois, which was owned by Mrs. Huffman.

On December 3, 1976, around 10:00 p.m., Mr. Lillard, then 23 years of age, gave his statement to Investigators Robert LeConte and Larry Rollins. Mr. Lillard indicated that upon leaving his home, with a pry bar in his hand, Mr. Lillard walked across the street to Jo-Mar Rings and Things. "I asked Mrs. Huffman about some earrings on the shelf behind her. As she turned around to get them, I hit her in the head with a pry bar. I asked her where is the money? She walked over to the cash register and got the money out and put it in a bag. Next, I told her to go to the back. As we walked back to the rear of the store, I told her to sit down. As she sat down, she opened the desk drawer and put more money in the same bag, which was approximately \$100.00. After I got the money, I just started hitting her while she was facing me. She put up her arms to protect herself." The record reflects that Mrs. Huffman was hit approximately 17 times with the crowbar, breaking both arms and crushing her skull, which resulted in her death. Mrs. Huffman's injuries left her beyond facial recognition.





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After the Murder, Mr. Lillard left the store with the money and certain other items, including a CB radio. After Mr. Lillard's confession, he was arrested for Murder. He entered a plea of guilty to the Murder and on May 13, 1976, he was sentenced.

#### MR. LILLARD'S STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Lillard stated he is very remorseful for what he did and prays every day for the victim's family. He stated he "hopes and prays they can forgive me for what I have done." He stated "I knew I did it, but don't understand why I did it." Mr. Lillard stated he did have a dream about committing the Murder about a month prior to the event. Mr. Lillard stated his only rationale for his behavior is his long history of past drug use. He stated he started using drugs at age 17, and continued using approximately 2-3 times per week until his arrest. He stated he used crystal meth, LSD, angel dust, acid, cocaine, and marijuana. He stated "I tried a little of everything." Mr. Lillard stated, "I was not in control of myself."

Mr. Lillard stated he realized he took a life and can't bring that life back. He stated he went into the store to ask for money and the he doesn't know why he just started hitting her; Mr. Lillard stated that he got scared, and repeated that "I can't really give you a good reason why." Mr. Lillard stated the only thing he can do now is "try to do what is right."

#### CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Lillard was on probation for a prior Burglary conviction at the time he committed the Murder of Mrs. Huffman.

#### INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Lillard is currently incarcerated at Graham Correctional Center, where he has been since May 13, 2018. He currently is a minimum-security offender and is on A grade. He is a low escape risk. His SPIN Assessment level is overall low.

Mr. Lillard's overall adjustment has been positive. During his 44 years of incarceration, he has received fewer than 30 tickets, with the last one occurring in 2011. He has had all of his good time credit restored. His last violent ticket was in 1981, when he got into a fight with his cellmate. Mr. Lillard stated he has grown up, and he now tries to stay focused and tries to do what is right. He stated he wants people to treat him like a human being.

Mr. Lillard reported he is currently assigned as the clerk for the Major. He stated he received this job assignment because "[t]hey trust me." He stated this assignment requires him to complete paperwork and issue passes. He has held numerous jobs in the past, which included porter, custodian, food service, and laundry worker. He also stated he has attended some college courses in English and received numerous certificates for attending AA and NA meetings.



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Mr. Lillard stated he attends Christian services regularly and is not a member of any gangs. He stated he also has had the opportunity to mentor other incarcerated individuals during his sentence. He stated it is easy to make a mistake, but harder to do what is right. He stated he tells them "this place is nothing to brag about".

Mr. Lillard stated he is in good mental and physical health, but has a chronic illness, for he does not take any medication.

On June 10, 2020, a mental health review was completed by the Department of Corrections at the request of the Prisoner Review Board. That review found no diagnosable mental health issues, and noted that Mr. Lillard is functioning well. The report also indicated a review was also completed in 1977, and Mr. Lillard did not meet criteria for a mental health diagnosis at that time.

Mr. Lillard is the son of Othello and Theotto Lillard and is the fourth of nine children. He stated his mother passed away in 2000 and his father in 2014. Mr. Lillard stated he was raised in Danville and had a normal childhood. He stated he attended school in Danville and graduated from high school in 1968. Mr. Lillard stated he talks to his remaining siblings regularly and they would visit once or twice per year.

#### PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Lillard has the same parole plan as he did in March of 2020. Mr. Lillard has been accepted to St. Leonard's House Ministries in Chicago. At St. Leonard's House, Mr. Lillard would be able to avail himself of substance abuse, case management, psychotherapy, recovery maintenance, and employment assistance programs. In addition to St. Leonard's House, Mr. Lillard has two sisters who are willing to give him full support, if he is 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 R.N., and the other is a retired Sergeant First Class; both are willing to give their brother all the support needed to have a successful re-entry.

The parole plan was discussed with Mr. Lillard's sister by telephone. She confirmed that she and her sister would help Mr. Lillard as needed. She stated they are willing to help financially and emotionally. She stated that she and her sister offered their homes in Georgia and California as a first option, after he completes the program at St. Leonard House. She stated they discussed the various options and felt it would be the best option; it would also prevent any additional stress for the victim's family, by not having Mr. Lillard return to the Danville area. She stated that she and her husband would help Danny find employment and complete any recommendations of parole.



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**DISCUSSION**

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Shelton spoke about Mr. Lillard's record in IDOC. Mr. Lillard was incarcerated for 5 years, when he stabbed another incarcerated person, and then received another ticket 5 years later. Mr. Shelton noted that, at the time of the offense, Mr. Lillard's own father felt that Mr. Lillard needed to be locked up away from the public. Mr. Lillard's answer to what has changed in him that would result in a successful parole was that he had changed himself.

Ms. Martinez asked what institution the stabbing occurred in. Mr. Brink didn't have that information.

Mr. Tupy said he believed that Mr. Lillard and the victim knew each other. Mr. Tupy observed that one of Mr. Lillard's sisters had worked for the victim, and the victim felt threatened by Mr. Lillard. Mr. Tupy wondered why Mr. Lillard would take a crowbar with him into the shop, unless he was planning to do some damage. Mr. Lillard had admitted to using PCP ("angel dust") in the previous month. The autopsy report of the victim showed a brutal beating, and Mr. Lillard had no explanation as to why he had done it.

Ms. Daniels asked if Mr. Lillard had acknowledged his guilt. Mr. Brink stated that yes, Mr. Lillard had acknowledged guilt.

Mr. Ruggiero noted that this was a very violent crime. Mr. Lillard has no current psychological diagnosis and appears to be functioning well in general population at the institution. Mr. Ruggiero questioned whether Mr. Lillard has changed or whether the institution is missing something.

Mr. Shelton noted that the victim had talked to her two daughters about her fear of Mr. Lillard. Mr. Shelton wondered if a possible explanation for the crime is that Mr. Lillard was angry with the victim, because she would not allow him to take a ring before he paid for it.

Mrs. Perkins said that during a previous interview with Mr. Lillard, he appeared to be in good health and remorseful for his crime. He is consistent with his statements that he doesn't know why he committed the crime. Mrs. Perkins asked Mr. Brink if he got similar impressions of Mr. Lillard, which Mr. Brink confirmed.

Ms. Martinez said Mr. Lillard has had an evaluation and that he participated in programs. Mr. Dunn noted that Mr. Lillard had participated in mental health groups in 2014.

Mr. Lillard's attorney, Ms. Lang, spoke on his behalf. She stressed to the Board that Mr. Lillard has a renewed letter from St. Leonard's House verifying his acceptance there. He also has letters from two sisters, who live out-of-state, offering housing. Mr. Lillard has a strong desire to work and is currently working as a clerk in the Major's office at the facility. Ms. Lang said Mr.



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Lillard's actions have expressed remorse and acceptance of guilt. He accepted sentencing with no negotiated plea for reducing his sentence. At his institutional hearings, Mr. Lillard spoke of his drug usage. His tickets were early in his incarceration, and Mr. Lillard admits that it took him a while to become who he is today. Ms. Lang noted that Mr. Lillard is very introspective and knows that he cannot undo the hurt he caused.

Mr. Lillard's brother also spoke on his behalf. He stated that he speaks for his family and for Mr. Lillard and they all agree that St. Leonard's House is where he needs to go. His brother assured the Board that Mr. Lillard is changed and is remorseful, and that he is telling the truth when he says that he doesn't know why he committed this crime. Mr. Lillard's family argued that the correctional system has done its job and urged to Board to parole Mr. Lillard.

Chairman Findley noted that representatives from Vermillion County were present at previous year's hearing and that their absence does not lessen their protest.

Mr. Dunn noted that the position of a Major's clerk was a position of trust in the institution. Mr. Shelton agreed and said that the Major acts as the Warden on that shift.

### **DECISION AND RATIONALE**

Motion to grant parole (DB—DWD). Motion prevails by a vote of 10–3. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley. Mr. Fisher, Mr. Shelton, and Mr. Tupy dissented.

After a complete review of Mr. Lillard's case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to grant parole to Mr. Lillard, subject to conditions of parole as set by the Board and by law. The Board hereby finds that Mr. Lillard 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—September 24, 2020**

Inmate Name: **SIDNEY FOSTER**

IDOC Number: **C50335**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on September 24, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Sidney Foster C50335.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fisher, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

**PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE**

A parole consideration interview was held on August 18, 2020, with Sidney Foster C50335. Mr. Foster is currently 78 years old. He is a resident at Big Muddy River Correctional Center. He has been incarcerated for 46 years. Mr. Foster was unable to communicate the facts of the case.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

Mr. Foster and the victim, Ms. Vivian Patterson, had been living together for about two and a half years prior to her Murder; they knew each other through the music business. Ms. Patterson also had four children, who resided with her and Mr. Foster; the 12-year-old son of Ms. Patterson testified at trial that Mr. Foster insisted that the child call Mr. Foster “Mama,” and that Mr. Foster forced the child to engage in abnormal sexual conduct and to observe Mr. Foster engage in sexual acts. Mr. Foster learned that Ms. Patterson was considering a move to California, and was fearful that this would end his relationship with the child.

On or about December 18, 1974, Mr. Foster borrowed a .38 caliber revolver and six .38 caliber bullets from Edward Thomas, a friend in the music business. Mr. Foster returned the revolver to Mr. Thomas on or about December 31, 1973. When Mr. Foster returned the revolver, it contained two bullets and four empty chambers. A medical examiner testified at trial that Ms. Patterson had been shot four times in the head. A firearm expert testified that a recovered bullet fragment had characteristics consistent with being fired from the same type of .38 caliber revolver as the one borrowed by Mr. Foster from Mr. Thomas.

Wilbur Richburg and Marvin Morgan testified at trial that Mr. Foster offered to pay them \$5,000.00 to dismember the body of Ms. Patterson, and that, once this task was completed, they wrapped her body parts in sheets and put them in the trunk of the car.



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On or about January 23, 1974, Chicago Police Department Officers, after detecting a strong odor and smell, discovered the badly decomposed and dismembered body of 33-year-old Ms. Patterson, in the trunk of a car located in a parking lot at 2030 State Street in Chicago, Illinois. Inside the trunk, police found the torso, arms, and legs of Ms. Patterson wrapped in bed sheets. Ms. Patterson had been shot numerous times in the head.

It was determined after an investigation that Mr. Foster owned the car. After further investigation, Mr. Foster was arrested on January 27, 1974, and charged with the Murder of Ms. Patterson. According to the file record, Mr. Foster is serving a sentence of 25-250 years for Murder, and a sentence of 2-6 years for Concealment of Homicidal Death, with the sentences to run concurrently

#### INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Foster has been unassigned since 2013. Mr. Foster has not received any disciplinary reports in the last 12 months, with the last one in May of 2016. Mr. Foster's last visit was in 2004; he stated he has no living relatives. This is Mr. Foster's only period of incarceration. Mr. Foster is currently on A grade status. Mr. Foster does require the use of a wheelchair to move long distances and requires an aide to complete his daily routine.

#### PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Foster has no parole release plans. He would require a halfway house, assisted living, or nursing home because of his inability to take care of himself. Mr. Foster has never accepted responsibility for the Murder of Ms. Patterson. He has received his G.E.D since being incarcerated. Mr. Foster received a Psychological evaluation at the Board's request.

#### DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mrs. Perkins noted that Mr. Foster has hearing and memory loss, which requires supervision and makes him hard to understand and communicate with. He would need an assisted living site if granted parole. Mr. Foster has no current mental health diagnosis.

Mr. Shelton asked Mrs. Perkins whether the reason Mr. Foster didn't respond was because he couldn't hear or because he didn't have the capacity to understand what was happening. Mrs. Perkins felt that Mr. Foster was not able to process what was going on. Mr. Shelton indicated that could be the reason that Mr. Foster has not formulated a parole plan.

Cook County State's Attorney's Office stood on their submitted letter of protest.



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**DECISION AND RATIONALE**

Motion to deny parole (AMP—JR). Motion prevails by a vote of 13–0.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Foster’s case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Foster would not conform to reasonable conditions of parole release, and that 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—September 24, 2020**

Inmate Name: **ROGER TOLEFREE**

IDOC Number: **C83885**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on September 24, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Roger Tolefree C83885.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fisher, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

**PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE**

Roger Tolefree C83885 was interviewed for parole consideration on June 18, 2020, via WebEx. Mr. Tolefree was joined by his brother and two sisters during the interview. Mr. Tolefree appeared to be in good health and was prepared to speak on his behalf.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

Per the 2018 *en banc* Minutes in Mr. Tolefree's case (incorporated by reference):

Mr. Tolefree was born on April 13, 1949, in Edinburg, Arkansas, and moved to Chicago in 1953. His parents were Mauldell and Vester Tolefree; both parents are now deceased. Mr. Tolefree is the second-eldest of 16 children and two of his siblings are deceased. He often communicates with his family by way of letters and phone calls. He has never been married nor has he had children. Mr. Tolefree has been engaged twice, with both engagements having failed due to his incarceration. Before incarceration, Mr. Tolefree completed the 11th grade. He stopped going to school to take employment at the Chocolate Factory during 1966–1969 and thereafter at Waco Chemicals, but left employment after sustaining an injury. Mr. Tolefree has currently served 41 years.

Mr. Tolefree is currently incarcerated for the Rape of then-23-year-old Margaret Sullivan. He was sentenced to 30–100 years on December 11, 1978. The crime occurred on May 6, 1977, at the victim's apartment at 244 E. Pearson, Chicago, Illinois. Ms. Sullivan lived in a high-rise apartment building for the staff of Wesley Hospital. On May 16, 1977, at 6:30 p.m., Ms. Sullivan was returning to her 10th-floor apartment after throwing away her garbage in the hallway receptacle. As she was returning, she encountered Mr. Tolefree in the hallway, outside of her apartment. She felt somewhat fearful, so she went to the apartment of friends on two different floors, neither of whom was home. She then went to the lobby and decided to return to





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her apartment shortly after, thinking that she was being overly cautious. As she reached her apartment door, she again saw Mr. Tolefree in an adjacent hallway leading to a fire escape. Ms. Sullivan quickly attempted to open her door and enter her apartment. However, as she entered her apartment, Mr. Tolefree pushed the door in and forced his way into her apartment.

The force of the door knocked her to the floor, and she began to scream for help. Ms. Sullivan struggled with Mr. Tolefree as he grabbed her and forced her into her bathroom, throwing her head against the wall. He slapped her across the face, held a “rat-tail” comb with a sharp point against her throat, and stated, “stop fighting me, or I’ll use this comb on you.” Ms. Sullivan stopped struggling and attempted to talk him out of the attack, but she was unsuccessful. Ms. Sullivan was forced from the bathroom to the bedroom and raped twice. During the first sexual assault, Ms. Sullivan’s telephone rang; she was instructed to answer the phone and told the caller that she would return the call later. It was at this point that Mr. Tolefree told Ms. Sullivan that he felt that he could trust her not to report him to the police. He then showed her his chess club membership card. Ms. Sullivan was able to observe his first name and the first letters of his last name on the card. Mr. Tolefree forced Ms. Sullivan into her bedroom for a second time and raped her again. After the second rape, Mr. Tolefree fled the scene.

As he left, Ms. Sullivan called the person who had phoned her during the attack. She told the friend that she had been raped. She also called another friend who lived in the building. This friend was a nurse, and she accompanied Ms. Sullivan to the hospital. A doctor examined Ms. Sullivan, and noted bruises and lacerations to the victim’s nose, cheeks, elbows, arms, and knees. The doctor also observed slight bleeding to her cervix. During the course of the investigation, the investigators were able to trace Mr. Tolefree through his chess club membership. The investigators compared the fingerprints on file to those found at the scene, finding a match to fingerprints on a drinking glass in the apartment. A warrant was issued, and Mr. Tolefree was placed under arrest on May 29, 1977.

Mr. Tolefree elected to have a jury trial. On October 13, 1978, the jury returned a guilty verdict on the charge of Rape. On December 11, 1978, Judge Frank Wilson sentenced Mr. Tolefree to 30–100 years in prison. Mr. Tolefree appealed, and the Appellate Court affirmed the conviction. Mr. Tolefree specifically raised the issue of excessive sentence on appeal. On September 12, 1988, Mr. Tolefree filed a petition for post-conviction relief. The Court denied the petition on June 30, 1992. On December 4, 2008, Mr. Tolefree filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus. On January 23, 2009, the Honorable Judge Dennis Porter denied the petition.

### CRIMINAL HISTORY

Per the 2018 *en banc* Minutes (incorporated by reference):

May 22, 1969, arrested and charged with Attempt Auto Theft. On May 23, 1969, he was convicted and sentenced to one year of court supervision.



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Case Number 69-2387: On May 23, 1969 (the same day he was sentenced to court supervision), at 11:20 p.m., Mr. Tolefree, along with several co-offenders, entered Vic's Tavern at 833 N. Western Avenue in Chicago. The offenders pulled out guns and then robbed the victim of \$250, a Polaroid camera, and other items. Mr. Tolefree and his co-offenders were arrested two days later in a gang disturbance. Persons in the tavern later identified them. Mr. Tolefree was charged and released on bond.

Case No. 69-2383: On June 10, 1969, at approximately 12:45 a.m., while out on bond for the previous Armed Robbery, Mr. Tolefree and the same co-offenders entered the Shrimp House restaurant at 444 W. Cermak in Chicago. While armed with guns, they robbed the victim. Mr. Tolefree was later arrested after one of his co-offenders made a confession, and Mr. Tolefree was later identified. He was charged with Robbery. On the same day, he was arrested for Unlawful Use of a Weapon and Resisting Arrest after he robbed the victim at the Shrimp House. He was fined \$100 and released.

Case No. 69-2689: Three days later, on June 13, 1969, Mr. Tolefree and a co-offender committed another Armed Robbery. Mr. Tolefree was still on bond at that time. Mr. Tolefree and James Williams entered a 24-hour Clark Gas Station at 2340 W. 52nd Street in Chicago at 1:00 a.m. Mr. Tolefree asked the attendant to check the oil. As the attendant, Harry Kapitanek, checked the oil, Mr. Tolefree approached Mr. Kapitanek with a small revolver in hand. Mr. Tolefree ordered Mr. Kapitanek into the station and signaled James Williams to also come inside. Mr. Williams was armed with a .45 caliber pistol. Inside the station, Mr. Tolefree and Mr. Williams took the attendant's money, money belt, and coin changer. Before leaving, Mr. Tolefree struck Mr. Kapitanek in the head with a gun. Mr. Tolefree and Mr. Williams then stole several cartons of Kool cigarettes on their way out of the station. The victim called the police to the scene and provided them with descriptions of Mr. Tolefree and Mr. Williams. The victim was later transported to the hospital and treated for his head wound, for which he received six stitches in his head. Around 1:40 a.m., police officers observed a car run a stoplight. The car fit the description of the car used in the gas station robbery. The officers pulled the car over with assistance of other units. Mr. Tolefree and Mr. Williams were ordered out of the car; an automatic .45 caliber and a .22 caliber revolver were recovered from the front seats of the car, along with a carton of Kool cigarettes and a coin changer on a belt. Mr. Tolefree and Mr. Williams were taken into custody. The victim, Mr. Kapitanek, identified both offenders as the men who robbed him.

Mr. Tolefree was charged in three separate cases, but was ultimately convicted of Armed Robbery after a jury trial in Case No. 69-2689. On October 15, 1969, the Honorable Judge Louis Garippo sentenced Mr. Tolefree to a term of 5–20 years. On January 19, 1970, Mr. Tolefree pleaded guilty to the charges of Robbery in both Case No. 69-2687 and Case No. 69-2383. He was sentenced in each case to a term of 3–10 years, to run concurrently with each other and concurrently with his sentence in Case No. 69-2689.



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### INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Tolefree indicated he remains busy "doing research for his legal issues and corresponding with John Howard Association." He currently has a janitorial job in his dorm. He enjoys reading and speaking with his family on a regular basis. Mr. Tolefree indicated he is currently on a waitlist for groups at his current facility. Mr. Tolefree has been active in the past with groups such as Lifestyle Redirection, Trac I, Inner Circle, and is a Muslim Participant. Mr. Tolefree indicates he is a part of an organization which advocates for prisoners called PAAC. He has also suggested more groups should be offered for offenders who have sexual issues, and that he could assist with this topic.

Mr. Tolefree has received more than 138 tickets during his incarceration. In the past six months, Mr. Tolefree has had multiple disciplinary reports written for inappropriate behavior with female staff, with the most recent occurring in April 2020, during which he also received a 107 Sexual Misconduct ticket. He also had an altercation in the lunchroom. Mr. Tolefree was very aware of how these incidents may look in regards to his parole consideration, and he hoped that his other positive adjustments would outweigh these moments.

While incarcerated, Mr. Tolefree has completed his GED as well as earned 136 college credit hours. He is active in programs such as: Inner Circle, Life Style redirection, anger Management, One Track, and Law Clerk. He takes much pride in an organization called PACC that helps inmates adjust in society.

### PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Tolefree has maintained strong relationships with his brothers and sisters. It is these relationships that will be relied upon during his parole, if granted. Mr. Tolefree plans to live with his brother, who is a licensed therapist. In Mr. Tolefree's interview, his brother stated that Mr. Tolefree would be staying in his brother's house and that his brother would be able to assist Mr. Tolefree financially. Furthermore, his sisters, who live within 30 minutes of Mr. Tolefree's proposed host site, stated in the interview that they would also be a resource for Mr. Tolefree.

Mr. Tolefree currently does not have any outside resources in place for employment, but states he is eligible for social security. When asked about counseling programs, specifically sex offender counseling, he stated although he did not have anything in place, he would be looking for additional services once he was released.



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**DISCUSSION**

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. James noted that Mr. Tolefree has a family of 16 siblings and a brother, and two sisters have offered support.

Ms. Crigler noted that Mr. Tolefree's strong tone in his voice comes across as aggressive.

It was observed that Mr. Tolefree has a solid parole plan. There are no work plans included but services are available that are needed by Mr. Tolefree. Mr. Tolefree received his last ticket just 2 months ago.

It was noted that Mr. Tolefree has a projected mandatory parole release date in January of 2022.

The State stood on its letter of protest, opposing the release of Mr. Tolefree.

The Board noted that, in the event parole were to be granted, the Attorney General's office would request a 90-day stay for an evaluation to determine if Mr. Tolefree is a sexually violent person.

Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Tolefree has received a total of 12 tickets for sexual misconduct.

**DECISION AND RATIONALE**

Motion to deny parole (OJ—AMP). Motion prevails by a vote of 13–0. Leave.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Tolefree's case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Tolefree would not conform to reasonable conditions of parole release, that a grant of parole release would have a substantially 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.

*"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 24, 2020**

Inmate Name: **RONNIE CARRASQUILLO** IDOC Number: **C80186**

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on September 24, 2020, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Ronnie Carrasquillo C80186.

Members present were Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Fisher, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, Ms. Wilson, and Chairman Findley.

Recording Secretary: Janet Crane.

**PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE**

Ronnie Carrasquillo C80816 was sentenced to 200–600 years of imprisonment, following his 1978 conviction for the Murder of Chicago Police Officer Terrence Loftus, which occurred on October 10, 1976.

Due to restrictions enacted to restrict the transmission of COVID-19, the parole consideration interview was held on August 20, 2020 by videoconference. In remote attendance were Mr. Carrasquillo, his two attorneys, his older brother and brother's wife, as well as a half-sister.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

Per the Cook County State's Attorney's Office's Official Statement of Facts:

Mr. Carrasquillo, a known gang member (Imperial Spanish Gangsters), was attending a party of 40–50 people while armed with a .22 caliber pistol. One of the partygoers, a fellow gang member who had left the party, was at some point being chased through the neighborhood by rival gang members (Alley Gaylords). Ofc. Loftus, who was in plain clothes and driving home after completing his shift, observed the chase, intercepted the parties, and identified himself as a police officer.

Ofc. Loftus, while maintaining a grip on the person whom he had just witnessed being pursued, was shot in the face by one of four-to-five shots fired by Mr. Carrasquillo



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Per the 2019 Statement of Facts:

Immediately prior to the shooting, it came to the attention of people in the party that there was a conflict in the street. People from the party, including Mr. Carrasquillo, emptied onto the street, but Mr. Carrasquillo first acquired a larger caliber pistol – a .32 caliber – from a fellow gang member.

Mr. Carrasquillo came down to the street to the presence of 50–75 people. Some people were fighting and uniformed officers from a marked patrol car w/lights flashing were also present. One of those officers heard someone shout, “Gangster love,” then immediately heard four or five shots in rapid succession. It was one of these shots that struck Officer Loftus in the face. Ofc. Loftus, who was armed, but who had not drawn a weapon at the time, died two days later.

#### MR. CARRASQUILLO’S STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Carrasquillo has provided various statements to the Board, as documented over the years of his incarceration. Mr. Shelton provided a through chronology of those statements, including the dates when the statement changed or was altered by Mr. Carrasquillo. Mr. Shelton particularly noted that at the August 2020 parole consideration, for the first time, Mr. Carrasquillo admitted to leaning over a vehicle for support while taking aim at Ofc. Loftus. Mr. Shelton noted that this stands in marked contrast to Mr. Carrasquillo’s many past claims of firing warning shots into the air above the crowd.

Much additional discussion focused on what appears to have been generally accepted by the Board as reasonable evidence of Carrasquillo’s distancing from gang life and/or the lack of substantial evidence of a continuation of gang life.

#### INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Due to the confidential nature of the information involved, the Board deliberated upon evidence relating to Mr. Carrasquillo’s institutional adjustment in Closed Session.

In Open Session, numerous letters of support – both current and historical – were noted. Several current letters were explored by recitation. Additional correspondence was referenced generally. Many of the supportive references relate to personal stories about Mr. Carrasquillo’s involvement as an unofficial mentor who has brought former hardcore gang members to the Bible.

In addition to theological studies, Mr. Carrasquillo has earned various trade certificates. He has documented training in H.V.A.C.R. Technology, Sheet Metal, Basic Small Engine Repair, and he earned his high school equivalency certificate in 2018.



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PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Carrasquillo's proposed parole plan was acceptable and thoroughly-prepared. The Board noted that there was no dispute regarding the quality of Mr. Carrasquillo's parole plan.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Board heard passionate testimony of opposition for parole, to match the passionate support that has also been received. Letters of opposition – including but not limited to those of the victim's immediate family – continue to accrue.

A July 7, 2020, letter from Cook County State's Attorney Kimberly Foxx offered no opposition to a grant of parole. This was contrasted to a previous November 13, 2019, opposition letter containing a lengthy and strenuous objection to release.

**DISCUSSION**

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Shelton noted that Ofc. Loftus's wound had a straight and level trail, which was one of the facts dispelling the statement by Mr. Carrasquillo that he shot up in the air.

Mr. Shelton noted that Mr. Carrasquillo's conviction was in 1978, and that he was first considered for parole in 1985. Mr. Shelton further noted that Mr. Carrasquillo had recently filed a request for a new trial, which was denied by the Appellate Court on March 31, 2020. The basis for that new trial request was that the conviction was the result of a corrupt judge, and that evidence of that corruption was the judge's acquittal of a mobster who was later re-tried and convicted – an assertion that was ultimately rejected unanimously by the Appellate court. Mr. Carrasquillo's petition asserted that his sentence was excessive for an 18-year-old, first-time defendant, and that the sentence violated his constitutional rights.

Mr. Shelton talked about his conversation with Mr. Carrasquillo's brother, who spoke in support of parole for Mr. Carrasquillo via video conference. His brother said their parents divorced when the children were young, and that their mother, up until her death, depended on the school system to raise the boys.

Motion to enter Closed Session to discuss confidential and privileged victims' statements and confidential information relating to Mr. Carrasquillo's institutional adjustment. (DS—KT).  
Leave.

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



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Mr. Carrasquillo's attorney, Jean Snyder, spoke on his behalf. She introduced Jennifer Soble, another of Mr. Carrasquillo's attorneys, and Alexandra Pruitt, a law student familiar with Mr. Carrasquillo, to the Board. Ms. Snyder addressed statements that she felt to be inaccurate. She said that at the time of his arrest, Mr. Carrasquillo stated that he had not known he had killed anyone. He shot because the officer pointed his weapon at one of his friends, but that he had shot into the air. Ms. Snyder spoke to Mr. Shelton's reference to an incomplete quote from the trial that was used in the parole petition submitted in behalf of Mr. Carrasquillo. Ms. Snyder also noted that Mr. Carrasquillo has never denied his gang involvement, but that he has long ago given that involvement up. She stressed the strong family support, available work and housing, and Mr. Carrasquillo's involvement in church, which she noted is believed to be genuine by many people.

Ms. Snyder mentioned the two-page letter written in support of parole by a law student, the previously-introduced Ms. Pruitt, who studied and wrote her thesis on Mr. Carrasquillo. Other letters of support were written by gang members – some of whom were members of opposing gangs – who were led to Christ with Mr. Carrasquillo's help, and a youth pastor's letter of support.

Ms. Snyder noted the COVID-19 concerns caused by Mr. Carrasquillo's heart condition. He has gotten treatment for his condition and is currently stable. Ms. Snyder again noted that Mr. Carrasquillo has only received eight tickets during his lengthy incarceration and has received votes in support of his parole at previous *en banc* hearing.

Ms. Crigler noted that Mr. Carrasquillo has previously admitted that he pulled the trigger on the weapon that killed the officer, but that he never admitted aiming and shooting him. She feels that, after 44 years, he may be considered an urban myth with the gang population in Chicago. Ms. Crigler noted that his parole plan does not place him in Chicago, which Ms. Crigler felt spoke to his rehabilitation.

Ms. Wilson asked if the officer killed was in uniform. It was noted that Ofc. Loftus was in plain clothes.

Ms. Martinez described to the Board the area of Chicago where Mr. Carrasquillo was living and described it as "living in a war zone" during the time period in question. She noted that his age added to his not making good decisions.

Mr. Dunn asked about the current gang situation of Mr. Carrasquillo's former gang. Ms. Crigler was unsure but suggested that his former acquaintances would most likely be dead or inactive. Mr. Shelton stated that the circle that Mr. Carrasquillo ran with is "old news," but that the Imperial Spanish Gangsters still exist, as evidenced by recent federal prosecutions.

Mr. James asked if Mr. Carrasquillo had said why he was shooting. Mr. Shelton noted that it makes no sense to believe that Mr. Carrasquillo only meant to shoot into the air, as he had





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previously claimed, given trial testimony regarding his leaning across a car to shoot and his admission this year to that same fact. Mr. Shelton stated that he can't speculate as to whether or not Mr. Carrasquillo knew the victim was a police officer or not, but the facts make clear that he aimed the weapon. The important part is whether or not he purposefully shot a person.

Mr. Shelton noted that there were three statements in the parole petition that Mr. Carrasquillo's attorneys expected the Board to take as facts, but which Mr. Shelton identified were inaccurate.

Mr. James noted that the last 9 years of Mr. Carrasquillo's incarceration showed no indication of gang activity, but wondered what were the reason he was moved around was.

Mr. Fisher questioned why in eight months' time the Cook County State's Attorney's Office withdrew their protest against parole of Mr. Carrasquillo.

Chairman Findley noted that prior to the 1995 prison reform effort, gangs ran the prison system. They had members, referred to as "circuit riders," who controlled their area of the prison, based on their leadership's orders and directions. Chairman Findley noted that many individuals were transferred between prisons to prevent them gaining a foothold.

Ms. Daniels read from the Cook County State's Attorney's letter from 2019. It was stated that Mr. Carrasquillo was told the following day about the officer shooting.

Mr. Ruggiero noted that Mr. Carrasquillo knew Ofc. Loftus to be a police officer, because the officer had helped Mr. Carrasquillo out of a situation before.

Mr. Shelton noted that Ofc. Loftus worked in the area, was engaged in gang intervention, and was known by the gangs, per previously-provided testimony at past hearings of the Board.

Mr. Tupy recalled that, after the shooting, gang members boasted that "We killed a cop."

Mr. Shelton stated that Mr. Carrasquillo had a series of interviews in 1993 with IDOC Internal Affairs to determine his gang involvement. His denouncing of the gang at that time, however, was not accepted as credible by the Department.

Mr. James observed that Ofc. Loftus had helped Mr. Carrasquillo out about two months prior to the Murder, and that Ofc. Loftus had probably saved Mr. Carrasquillo's life.

Ms. Snyder talked about the witnesses at the trial, alleging that they were beaten in custody. Ms. Snyder indicated that potential witnesses claimed they were stopped and harassed by officers and advised that they had better testify "right." She noted that Mr. Carrasquillo was at the party at about 2:00 a.m. and very drunk, when it was announced that there was a rumble and members ran outside. Ms. Snyder made the point that, at the time, gang members were Mr. Carrasquillo's only friends. She pointed out that the officer was in plain clothes, driving a plain



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car. Mr. Carrasquillo said he shot at the YMCA building just to scare people off and that he has always been remorseful.

Ms. Pruitt addressed the Board. She wrote her thesis on Mr. Carrasquillo, whom she met about four years ago. She was visiting the Cook County Jail, seeking to report on religion and the change in people. People at the jail told her she needed to attend the Thursday night meeting if that's what she was interested in. She came back to the jail on Thursday evening, and Mr. Carrasquillo's sister spoke at the beginning of the meeting, and said Mr. Carrasquillo would be joining the meeting by phone. After doing her research, Ms. Pruitt felt she couldn't publish her thesis without interviewing Mr. Carrasquillo. She spent five hours at Dixon talking with him. She stated that he is much more than what is seen on paper. She said that she felt that, as a 15-year-old boy on the streets of Chicago, joining a gang was the only way for Mr. Carrasquillo to survive, but that Mr. Carrasquillo renounced the gang 30 years ago. Ms. Pruitt claimed that the reason IDOC did not acknowledge his denouncing the gang is because he would not indicate others who were involved. Ms. Pruitt says Mr. Carrasquillo takes full responsibility for his actions, and she has learned that we are all more than the worst thing we have ever done. Ms. Pruitt concluded her statement by asking the Board to give him a second chance.

Ms. Snyder described the scene of that night, stating that it was 2:00 a.m., and that the officer was coming home from having a drink after work, when he stopped and got involved in the fight. Board Members asked Ms. Snyder if her statements regarding the victim were factual statements that he had been drinking and replied that, "No I shouldn't have said that, it's just gossip." Numerous individuals spoke regarding their concern that the victim was being baselessly maligned, and the Board ultimately noted that the claim was highly inappropriate and that it would be given no weight.

The representatives of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office were asked what action caused the Office to decline to submit a letter of protest, after having submitted a lengthy (eight-page) one just eight months ago. No detail was given on any specific action and the State's Attorney's Office noted that they stand on their previous letter, in which they take no position regarding whether Mr. Carrasquillo should or should not be paroled at this time, leaving the decision fully in the discretion of the Board.

Chicago Police Department Officer (Retired) Frank DiMaria, a trustee of the Fraternal Order of Police, spoke in protest of parole. Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria addressed Ms. Snyder about her statement that Ofc. Loftus was on his way home after stopping for a drink. She apologized for her statement, but Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria felt that was very disrespectful to an officer who gave his life in the line of duty. He reminded the Board that the hearing was about the Murder of Officer Loftus and displayed Ofc. Loftus's picture. Ofc. Loftus was a member of the Tactical Unit for the 14<sup>th</sup> District and worked in plain clothes. He knew the area and he knew the players. Ofc. Loftus made the decision to stop and help that night. Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria noted that Ofc. Loftus still had his duty belt on. The call went out for a 10-1 (officer needs help), and there were at least



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50 people in the street. Mr. Carrasquillo had a “Saturday Night Special” handgun, but got a PPK from another gang member; Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria noted that is a very accurate weapon. He further noted that there was no party to go back to after the shooting, as people started scattering. Ofc. Loftus lived for two days after he was shot. Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria felt the State’s Attorney’s Office had turned its back on officers after they withdrew their opposition to parole and wondered what the reason for the change was. Det. (Ret.) DiMaria noted that Mr. Carrasquillo has powerful friends, who are asking for his release prior to his sentence completion. Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria asked the Board to remember the many lives changed that night in 1976: those of both the Loftus and Carrasquillo families. Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria noted that he has been coming to Mr. Carrasquillo’s parole consideration hearings for 18 years. Ofc. (Ret.) DiMaria noted that there had been five officers shot during the prior three months in Chicago, and argued that the idea of releasing Mr. Carrasquillo during this difficult time would send a message of disrespect for law and order.

Ms. Snyder said she understands how the officer’s family must be feeling. She hopes that the Board will focus on how Mr. Carrasquillo has changed his life and helped others, and that he has a chance to be with his family.

Chicago Police Department Officer John Catanzara also spoke in protest of parole. He noted that, had Ofc. Loftus lived, he would have been retired now. Ofc. Catanzara spoke to the discussion of Mr. Carrasquillo’s accuracy with a weapon and noted that Mr. Carrasquillo only needed 25% accuracy, as he fired four shots. Ofc. Catanzara stated that claiming that Mr. Carrasquillo has accepted responsibility is nonsense, as his story has changed in order to get what he wants — in this case parole. Ofc. Catanzara noted that gang members get “street cred” for police killings. He also noted that this killing was not unintentional, as it was stated that Mr. Carrasquillo was “shooting at a white man.” Ofc. Catanzara noted that, since this was a Latin gang (the Imperial Spanish Gangsters), Ofc. Loftus would stand out as a white man. Ofc. Catanzara feels the State’s Attorney’s Office is using this case as a “political football” and that COVID-19 is not a reason or excuse for parole.

Mr. Shelton asked Ms. Snyder about the recent action by the Appellate Court, denying a motion for a new trial. Ms. Snyder confirmed that there would most likely be some other methods pursued to reduce the sentence.

Chairman Findley noted that there have been hundreds of clemency petitions for early release due to COVID-19.

Ms. Crigler noted that, politically, this is a chaotic time. She stated that 200,000 American citizens didn’t have to die during this time, and that we are morally obligated to prevent deaths if we are able. She stated that this is an individual who is rehabilitated.

Mr. James recognized the great loss of this officer and the pressures of those officers working today. He reminded the Board that they are not retrying the case, and that if this victim



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had not been an officer, the Board would not be considering certain factors. While this officer was a great officer and individual, Mr. James feels that the Board can't pick and choose based on the crime and needs to be consistent in their decisions.

Chairman Findley noted that he has never fired a weapon when he wasn't trying to hit something. He said it's rare to see an incarcerated person who has changed so much, or who has a better parole plan. Mr. Carrasquillo has a loving home to go to; one that will help make sure he does not reoffend. Chairman Findley wondered how the Latin gangs, including the remaining Imperial Spanish Gangsters and related groups, would react if parole were granted to Mr. Carrasquillo, who had been a leader in the gang in the past. Chairman Findley made the observation that things would be different now in a similar situation; officers would not try to stop a large fight without backup. Chairman Findley noted that he believes that Mr. Carrasquillo could conform to the conditions of parole, but that granting parole would send a message of disrespect for the law.

### **DECISION AND RATIONALE**

Motion to deny parole (DS—JR). Motion prevails by a vote of 6–7. 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. Fisher, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Ruggiero, Mr. Shelton, Mr. Tupy, and Chairman Findley. Mr. Brink, Ms. Crigler, Ms. Daniels, Mr. Dunn, Mr. James, Ms. Martinez, and Ms. Wilson dissented.

After thorough consideration of Mr. Carrasquillo's case, the Board voted to deny parole. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as it 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."*