

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

ABIONA SHARPE
W98456

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 30, 2024

DATE OF DECISION: September 16, 2024

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

VOTE: Parole is granted to an approved home plan after 90 days in lower security.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On April 6, 2011, in Suffolk County Superior Court, Abiona Sharpe pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree for the death of Frank Bing. Mr. Sharpe was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he pleaded guilty to carrying a firearm without a license and was sentenced to two and a half years at the House of Correction to be served concurrently with his life sentence. On May 30, 2024, Abiona Sharpe appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was not represented by an attorney. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Abiona Sharpe's May 30, 2024, hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On May 13, 2009, 19-year-old Abiona Sharpe shot and killed 49-year-old Frank Bing. At 10:20 p.m., Mr. Bing was in the company of friends on the sidewalk of Wilcock Street in Boston when gunshots erupted from a passing minivan. The gunfire caused the group to scatter and resulted in damage to a motor vehicle. Police recovered ballistics on Wilcock Street that indicated multiple gunshots had been fired from two types of weapons. Mr. Bing was missing in the aftermath of the shooting, but was believed to have left the scene on his own. Early the next morning, a neighbor found Mr. Bing's body in the rear of a driveway on Wilcock Street. He had been shot in the leg, foot, and right chest. The chest wound perforated a lung, causing his death.

Shortly after the shooting, police located the suspect-minivan parked two blocks away on Estella Street. The engine was warm, and police observed ballistics damage inside and outside of the vehicle. Nearby, investigators observed Abiona Sharpe hastily drive away in an Acura with three passengers: his co-defendant, and two others. Officers stopped the Acura. Inside the Acura, investigators located keys to the minivan believed to have been used in the shooting, which was owned by the mother of one of the Acura's occupants. Mr. Sharpe was arrested on a probation warrant. A second occupant was arrested for possession of ammunition. The other two occupants were released. Investigators further searched the area and located two guns hidden in an alley – a sawed off .22 caliber rifle and a 9mm semiautomatic pistol. Test-firing and ballistics examination revealed that both weapons had discharged shell casings that were recovered on Wilcock Street and from the suspect minivan.

Mr. Sharpe fled Massachusetts soon after the homicide. He was arrested on July 21, 2009, at a New Jersey residence, where police and U.S. Marshalls found him hiding in a closet.


APPLICABLE STANDARD: Parole “[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society.” M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. In making this determination, the Board takes into consideration an inmate’s institutional behavior, their participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of incarceration, and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize the inmate’s risk of recidivism. M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. The Board also considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the inmate’s testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing and/or in written submissions to the Board (if applicable).

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Sharpe is before the Board for his initial hearing. He was nineteen years old at the time of the offense. The Board considered the Mattis factors of the emerging young adult brain development. The Board finds he has embraced the rehabilitation process. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Boston University in 2018. He is enrolled in graduate level courses at Emerson College. He has engaged in numerous Restorative Justice programs. He has had no substance use in 15 years. He has completed over 40 programs. He is actively involved in multiple groups and serves as a board member for many of the groups, including Massachusetts Parole Preparation Partnership (MPPP), Youthful Offenders Coalition, and Young Men’s Committee. Mr. Sharpe also serves as the Chair of the Transformative Justice Emerging Adult Project. He works at the Outer Inner Control Area at the Department of Corrections.

The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Abiona Sharpe has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Approve home plan before release; Waive work for 2 weeks; Supervise for drugs - testing in accordance with agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence - testing in accordance with agency policy; Report to Assigned MA Parole Office on Day of Release; No contact with victim(s)’ family; Counseling for grief, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and adjustment.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above-referenced hearing. Pursuant to G.L. c. 127, § 130, I further certify that all voting Board Members have reviewed the applicant's entire criminal record. This signature does not indicate authorship of the decision.


Tina M. Hurley, Chair


Date