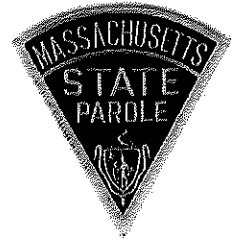


The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**BRUCE WILBORN**

**(AKA BRUCE MOORE)**

**W41085**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** May 17, 2018

**DATE OF DECISION:** September 4, 2019

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Colette Santa, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Paul Treseler<sup>1</sup>

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of offense, criminal record, institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the Board, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review in five years from the date of the hearing.

**I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

On January 23, 1985, in Hampden Superior Court, Bruce Wilborn pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of Stanley Weinstock. A sentence of life in prison with the possibility of parole was imposed on Mr. Wilborn for the murder of Mr. Weinstock.

In October 1983, Mr. Wilborn and (co-defendant) Robert Gonzales were residing in Ludlow with Mr. Weinstock. Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales became very close and decided that Mr. Weinstock was interfering with their relationship. The two men entered into a pact to kill

<sup>1</sup> Board Members Dupre and Santa were not present for the hearing, but participated in the vote.

Mr. Weinstock as a way of demonstrating their affection for one another. Based on conversations he had with Mr. Weinstock, Mr. Wilborn also believed that he would be the beneficiary of Mr. Weinstock's estate.

Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales devised a plan to lure Mr. Weinstock to a parking lot, where they intended to murder him. Knowing that Mr. Weinstock would often post advertisements in the newspaper seeking "houseboys," Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales sent Mr. Weinstock a letter from a fictitious man named "Tom." The letter stated Tom's interest in entering into a sexual relationship with Mr. Weinstock. The letter directed Mr. Weinstock to meet "Tom" at a parking lot in Springfield, at a specified time, on October 23, 1983. When Mr. Weinstock told Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales about the letter, they encouraged him to meet up for the date. On the evening of October 23, Mr. Weinstock went to the designated parking lot to meet "Tom." Between 7:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales found Mr. Weinstock in the parking lot and one, or both, of them (each man insisted that the other inflicted the stab wounds) stabbed Mr. Weinstock more than 30 times.

After murdering Mr. Weinstock, Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales got rid of some of the evidence in a dumpster behind a restaurant. Then, they picked up a friend to go drinking and dancing at a local lounge. During the course of the evening, Mr. Wilborn and Mr. Gonzales disposed of additional evidence. They also drove by the parking lot multiple times to see if the police had discovered Mr. Weinstock's body. Mr. Wilborn was subsequently arrested for the murder on October 27, 1983.

## **II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 17, 2018**

Mr. Wilborn, now 56-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board on May 17, 2018, for a review hearing. He was not represented by counsel. Mr. Wilborn was denied parole after both his 2001 initial hearing and his 2006 review hearing. Pursuant to a settlement agreement in a civil action that Mr. Wilborn brought against the Parole Board, he was given a review hearing on May 28, 2009. At this hearing, Mr. Wilborn received a positive vote and was paroled to Illinois to live with his mother and step-father. In 2010, however, Mr. Wilborn was returned to custody for violating his parole conditions. He appeared before the Board in 2012 for a review hearing (after the revocation of his parole) and parole was denied. Parole was denied after his 2016 review hearing, as well.

In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Wilborn apologized to the family of Mr. Weinstock and admitted that he was "more than an active participant in [the] planning, execution, and attempted covering-up" of his murder. He apologized to his own family and to those who were traumatized by his actions. Mr. Wilborn explained that the root of his criminal behavior, both before the commission of the governing offense and while on parole, was grounded in his "distorted thinking" and anxiety, which he was not able to fully appreciate until after he was returned to custody. When Board Members questioned Mr. Wilborn as to the underlying factors in the murder of Mr. Weinstock, he acknowledged that the motivation for the crime was financial. Both he and Mr. Gonzalez worked together to "lure" Mr. Weinstock to an area where they could kill him. When the Board noted that there have been discrepancies as to which man stabbed Mr. Weinstock, Mr. Wilborn stated that it was Mr. Gonzalez who stabbed him to death.

Board Members also questioned Mr. Wilborn about issues that occurred during his 10 months of parole supervision. Mr. Wilborn acknowledged that although he was initially successful on parole, he gradually stopped communicating with those who assisted with his reentry. Similar to previous hearings, Mr. Wilborn explained that he had maintained a romantic relationship with an inmate who was still incarcerated after he (Mr. Wilborn) was released. Mr. Wilborn admitted to engaging in unlawful behavior by working with the inmate's father in an attempt to send an altered computer to the inmate, so that they could communicate without restriction. The Board pointed out multiple factors surrounding this incident that suggested Mr. Wilborn assisted in a plan for the inmate to escape from prison. Mr. Wilborn, however, insisted that he had no intent to help the inmate escape.

The Board noted that Mr. Wilborn has accrued numerous disciplinary reports during his incarceration for offenses, such as threats, lying, and forgery. Mr. Wilborn explained that he used to think that it was acceptable to break rules "as long as no one else gets hurt," but that he has since addressed this type of distorted thinking through cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness practice sessions, and educational programming. Through programming efforts (such as Alternatives to Violence) and mentoring other inmates, Mr. Wilborn explained how he has improved his emotional awareness. He believes that he can now recognize his triggers before acting on them in an irrational manner.

Mr. Wilborn told the Board that, if released, he would prefer to live in Illinois with his family, where he could seek upholstery and carpentry work. He would also continue in rebuilding relationships with his family. Mr. Wilborn told the Board that he would have been better prepared for his previous release on parole had he gone to a step-down program. In addition, by no longer prioritizing romantic relationships over his well-being, Mr. Wilborn believes that he has given himself "a sense of liberty, freedom, and change." He recognizes that his words alone will not heal Mr. Weinstock's family, or give them closure, but he stated that it is "absolutely necessary" for him to express his remorse.

The Board considered the written submissions of Mr. Wilborn's mother, aunt, sister, and brother-in-law in support of parole. Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Howard Stafford testified in opposition to parole and submitted a letter of opposition. The Board also considered the written submission of Mr. Weinstock's cousin in opposition to parole.

### **III. DECISION**

The Board remains of the opinion that Mr. Wilborn has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

The applicable standard used by the Board to assess a candidate for parole is: "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such offender is released, the offender will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." 120 C.M.R. 300.04. In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Mr. Wilborn's institutional behavior, as well as his participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of his incarceration. The Board has also considered a risk and needs assessment and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Wilborn's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr.

Wilborn's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Bruce Wilborn is not rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Wilborn's next appearance before the Board will take place in five years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Wilborn to continue working towards his full rehabilitation.

*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.*

  
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

9/4/2019  
Date