

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

BRUCE WILBORN
W41085

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 16, 2023

DATE OF DECISION: August 9, 2023

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, James Kelcourse

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On October 23, 1983, Bruce Wilborn and a co-defendant stabbed Stanley Weinstock approximately thirty times, causing Mr. Weinstock's death. On January 23, 1985, in Hampden Superior Court, Mr. Wilborn pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree, and was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole. He later filed a motion to withdraw his guilty plea, which was denied, and the denial was affirmed by the Appeals Court.

Mr. Wilborn appeared before the Board for a review hearing on May 16, 2023. He was represented by Boston College Law School student attorneys under the supervision of Attorney Frank Herrmann. Mr. Wilborn postponed his initial hearing in 1998. Parole was denied following his hearings in 2001 and 2006. In 2009, Mr. Wilborn received a reserve vote. He was returned to custody in 2010 following a parole revocation. Parole was denied following Mr. Wilborn's review hearings in 2012, 2016, and 2018. The entire video recording of Mr. Wilborn's May 16, 2023 hearing is fully incorporated by reference into the Board's decision.

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 that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole.

Parole reserve on/after 6 months in lower security to interstate compact, Illinois. Mr. Wilborn appeared before the Board for the seventh time. He was paroled in 2009 and returned to custody 8/13/2010 after engaging in conduct that could have assisted another inmate with an escape. Mr. Wilborn had a long-standing relationship with the inmate, which he reportedly ended just prior to his return to custody.

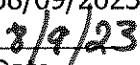
Mr. Wilborn has been back in custody for 13 years, during which time he has worked on addressing his history of unhealthy, co-dependent relationships, his criminal thinking, and personal trauma. He had been a tutor for the last 4 years with Tufts University initiative. He reinvested in alternatives to violence programming and earned his BA degree from Boston University. Mr. Wilborn has family support in Illinois and identified re-entry programs to provide counseling and other needs. Mr. Wilborn had supporters who attended his hearing and others who provided written submissions. His LSCMI is low. The Board considered the testimony of ADA Michael Julian from the Hampden District Attorney's Office.

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 Mr. Wilborn is rehabilitated and, therefore, merits parole at this time, subject to special conditions.

Special conditions: Parole reserve on/after 6 months in lower security to interstate compact, Illinois; Waive work for two weeks; Curfew at Parole Officer's discretion; Electronic monitoring at Parole Officer's discretion; Must take prescribed medication; 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 or association with Richard Zagranski; No contact with victim's family; Must have substance abuse evaluation and follow recommendations; Must have mental health counseling for anxiety disorder.

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

08/09/2023

Date