



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CARL STROMSNES¹
W63544

TYPE OF HEARING: **Review Hearing**

DATE OF HEARING: **July 2, 2024**

DATE OF DECISION: **October 10, 2024**

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sarah B. Coughlin,² Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz³

VOTE: Parole is granted after 2 weeks from issuance of Decision to a Long-Term Residential Treatment Program that meets her needs.⁴

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On November 3, 1997, in Suffolk Superior Court, Carl Stromsnes pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of her brother, Eric Stromsnes. She was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, she pleaded guilty to armed robbery and received a concurrent sentence of 10-12 years. Parole was denied following an initial hearing in 2011, and after a review hearing in 2017.⁵ On July 2, 2024, Carl Stromsnes appeared before the Board for a review hearing. She was represented by Attorney Deirdre Thurber. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Carl Stromsnes' July 2, 2024, hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On June 28, 1995, the Chelsea Fire Department and Chelsea police responded to a report of an injured person at 38 Englewood Avenue. All the windows and doors to the apartment were secured, and there were no signs of forced entry from the outside. Lying face down in a pool of blood in the kitchen was 33-year old Eric Stromsnes. He had a

¹ At the pre-hearing interview, Carl Stromsnes self-identified as female, preferring to be called "Kate." The 2024 Record of Decision reflects the use of female pronouns.

² Board Member Coughlin was not present for the hearing, but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the record prior to vote

³ Board Member Ortiz was not present for the hearing, but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the record prior to vote

⁴ One Board Member voted to deny parole with a review in one year from the date of the hearing.

⁵ Ms. Stromsnes postponed her hearings in 2010, 2016, and 2022

phone cord around his neck and had sustained multiple puncture and blunt force wounds. Near Eric Stromsnes' body was his open wallet on the table, as well as knives, a hammer, and a broken file on the floor. Two neighbors, and a relative who lived nearby, told investigators that they had seen Carl Stromsnes leave the family home around 7:30 p.m. with a red wrench in her back pocket. She appeared intoxicated and carried a duffel bag. According to witnesses, she tried to sell gold jewelry at a bar later that evening. She had two beers at the bar, which she paid for with money spotted with blood. Carl Stromsnes was arrested the following day.

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: Ms. Stromsnes presented for the third time before the Parole Board. She has been incarcerated for 29 years. Since the last hearing, Ms. Stromsnes has invested in treatment in the RTU and appears to have benefited. The Board also found the comprehensive evaluation by Dr. Nelligan helpful in providing the Board with her mental health and other needs and her current level of functioning. Dr. Nelligan also provided assessments of risk and recommendations for re-entry. The Board also considered the comprehensive re-entry plan, provided by Laura Honigman LICSW, that identifies specific services to assist her with her identified needs. The Board also considered the effects that continued incarceration would have on her. She presented as invested in the re-entry plan that will address her substance use disorder and mental health needs. Ms. Stromsnes disclosed that she is transitioning and has been victimized in the Department of Correction as a result. The Board, therefore, will parole Ms. Stromsnes directly to a residential treatment setting in light of specific concerns. Expert witnesses that testified were Dr. Nelligan and Laura Honigman LICSW. Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Montez Haywood spoke in opposition to parole, along with the victim's nephew. The Board concludes that Ms. Stromsnes has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make her release compatible with the welfare of society.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Long-Term Residential Treatment Program; Waive work for program; Curfew must be home between 10 PM and 6 AM at Parole Officer's discretion; Electronic monitoring at Parole Officer's discretion; Must take medication if prescribed; Supervise for drugs with testing in accordance with Agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence with testing in accordance with Agency policy; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; No contact with victim(s)' family; Must have substance abuse evaluation and follow recommended treatment plan; Counseling for relapse prevention, trauma informed therapy, and gender affirming treatment.

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