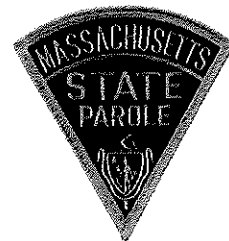


*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*  
**PAROLE BOARD**

*12 Mercer Road*  
*Natick, Massachusetts 01760*



**Maura T. Healey**  
*Governor*

**Kimberley Driscoll**  
*Lieutenant Governor*

**Terrence M. Reidy**  
*Secretary*

*Telephone: (508)-650-4500*

*Facsimile: (508)-650-4599*

**Tina M. Hurley**  
*Chair*

**Lian Hogan**  
*Executive Director*

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**CHRISTINE ALEXANDER<sup>1</sup>**  
**(F/K/A PAUL STOCKWELL)**

**W51335**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** **Initial Hearing**

**DATE OF HEARING:** **October 15, 2024**

**DATE OF DECISION:** **December 19, 2024**

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

**VOTE:** Parole is granted to a suitable LTRP (Long-Term Residential Program).<sup>2</sup>

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** Christine Alexander, formerly known as Paul Stockwell, was convicted of first-degree murder under a deliberate premeditation theory in Plymouth Superior Court on October 18, 1991. Ms. Alexander was sentenced to the mandatory term of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Ms. Alexander became parole eligible following the Supreme Judicial Court's decision in Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216 (2024), where the court held that sentencing individuals who were ages 18 through 20 at the time of the offense (emerging adults) to life without the possibility of parole is unconstitutional. As a result of the SJC's decision with regard to her first-degree murder conviction, Ms. Alexander was re-sentenced to life with the possibility of parole after 15 years. Ms. Alexander appeared before the Board for an initial hearing on October 15,

---

<sup>1</sup> At the time of the murder, Ms. Alexander was known as Paul Stockwell. She legally changed her name to Christine Alexander following conviction. The Board addresses Ms. Alexander by her legal name and uses she/her/hers pronouns in conformity with Ms. Alexander's gender identity.

<sup>2</sup> Two Board Members voted to deny parole with a review in 2 years.

2024, and was represented by Attorney Eva Jellison. The Board incorporates, by reference, the entirety of Ms. Alexander's October 15, 2024, hearing.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**<sup>3</sup> Twenty-year-old Christine Alexander strangled 18-year-old Mechelle Foster to death on October 1, 1989, in Hull. Leading up to the murder, Ms. Alexander learned that Ms. Foster was 6 weeks pregnant with their child. Ms. Alexander wanted Ms. Foster to have an abortion because she (Ms. Alexander) did not want the responsibility of a child and was concerned about the impact a child would have on her life. Ms. Alexander and Ms. Foster argued over the abortion, among other things. On the day of the murder, Ms. Alexander drove Ms. Foster to Hull, where they walked on the beach. The couple returned to Ms. Alexander's car and became sexually intimate. While seated in the car, Ms. Alexander choked Ms. Foster, who tried to escape from the vehicle. Ms. Alexander continued choking her until Ms. Foster stopped kicking and fighting, at which point Ms. Alexander understood that she was dead. Ms. Alexander drove to a dead-end street in Brockton and disposed of Ms. Foster's body in an area that was thick with brush and littered with trash. Ms. Alexander covered Ms. Foster's body with grass and left the area. The victim's body was not recovered until 9 days later. The medical examiner concluded that Ms. Foster's death was caused by manual strangulation. Scratches, bruises, and injuries to Ms. Foster's body indicated a struggle occurred prior to her death. Ms. Alexander told police that she choked Ms. Foster, but claimed she only placed her in a "sleeper hold." Ms. Alexander raised a criminal responsibility defense at trial, but the jury rejected that defense and convicted her of first-degree murder.

**APPLICABLE STANDARD:** Parole 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." G. L. c. 127, § 130. The Board considers multiple factors in making its decision, including the incarcerated individual's institutional behavior; their participation in available work, education, and treatment programs during their incarceration; and whether the incarcerated individual's chances of recidivism could be reduced by participation in risk reduction programs. G. L. c. 127, § 130. The Board considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the incarcerated individual at the time of the offense, the entirety of the incarcerated individual's criminal record, the incarcerated individual's institutional record, the incarcerated individual's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public expressed at the hearing and/or in written submission to the Board.

Where a parole candidate was convicted of first-degree murder for a crime committed when she was ages 18 through 20 years old, the Board considers the "unique aspects" of emerging adulthood that distinguish emerging adult offenders from older offenders. Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216, 238 (2024). Individuals who were emerging adults at the time of the offense must be afforded a "meaningful opportunity to obtain release based on demonstrated maturity and rehabilitation" and the Board evaluates "the circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime, including the age of the offender, together with all relevant information pertaining to the offender's character and actions during the intervening years since conviction." Id. (citing Diatchenko v. District Attorney for the Suffolk Dist., 466 Mass. 655, 674 (2013) (Diatchenko I); Miller v. Alabama, 567 U.S. 460, 471 (2012); Graham v. Florida, 560 U.S. 48, 75

---


<sup>3</sup> The factual summary is derived from Commonwealth v. Stockwell, 426 Mass. 17 (1997).

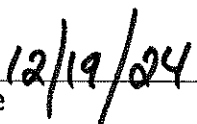
(2010)). Since brain development in emerging adulthood is ongoing, the Board also considers the following factors when evaluating parole candidates who committed the underlying offenses as an emerging adult: 1) a lack of impulse control in emotionally arousing situations; 2) an increased likelihood to engage in risk taking behaviors in pursuit of reward; 3) increased susceptibility to peer influence which makes emerging adults more likely to engage in risky behavior; and 4) an emerging adult's greater capacity for change. See Mattis, 493 Mass. at 225-229.

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** Ms. Alexander committed the murder when she was 20-years-old and has been incarcerated for the past 35 years. During her incarceration, Ms. Alexander engaged in numerous, significant programming to address her need areas, including Family Violence, Violence Reduction, and Restorative Justice. She also participated in the NEADs program for 5 years. The Board considered Ms. Alexander's age at the time of the offense and her capacity to change. The Board also considered her unique circumstances and increased risk of harm while incarcerated, as well as the report and testimony of Christa Maxant, LMHC, related to Ms. Alexander's history of gender dysphoria. Ms. Alexander presented with a solid re-entry plan to address her ongoing needs. The Board considered the opposition testimony of Plymouth Assistant District Attorney Karen Palumbo. The Board also considered the opposition testimony of the victim's sister, as well as the wife of the victim's nephew.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Long Term Residential Program – Bethany House or other suitable program; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; Waive work for program; Electronic monitoring for duration of program; Supervise for drugs with testing in accordance with Agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence with testing in accordance with Agency policy; No contact with victim(s)' family; Must have mental health counseling for 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