

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



PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

**DEBRA SKARPOS
F35221**

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: November 9, 2021

DATE OF DECISION: April 27, 2022

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Gloriann Moroney, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Colette Santa

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On April 3, 1992, in the Bristol Superior Court, Debra Skarpos pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of 60-year-old Reginald Desnoyers. Ms. Skarpos was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.


Ms. Skarpos appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on November 9, 2021 and was represented by law students Nick Soyer and David Walsh of the Harvard Prison Legal Assistance Project. This was Ms. Scarpos' third appearance before the Board since her final revocation hearing in 2013. Ms. Skarpos was previously released on parole but was revoked due to parole violations. The entire video recording of Ms. Skarpos' November 9, 2021 hearing is fully incorporated by reference to 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 by a unanimous vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole. Reserve to Long Term Residential Program (LTRP) or Community Resources for Justice – Transitional Housing - McGrath House. Ms. Skarpos is serving a life sentence for the murder of Reginald Desnoyers. Since her return to custody eight years ago, Ms. Skarpos has maintained and positive adjustment and has been program compliant. Her current medical issues have hindered recent program participation and employment. She has maintained her sobriety since 2013 and accepted responsibility for her missteps on parole. Ms. Skarpos gained coping skills and presented with insight and acceptance of responsibility, as she had not done so in the past.

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." In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Ms. Skarpos' institutional behavior, as well as her 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 Ms. Skarpos' risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Ms. Skarpos' case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Ms. Skarpos is rehabilitated and merits parole at this time.

Special Conditions: Reserve to Long Term Residential Program (LTRP) or Community Resources for Justice – Transitional Housing – McGrath House (must complete); Waive work for medical; Curfew must be at home between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.; ELMO-electronic monitoring at P.O. discretion; 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; Must have mental health evaluation – adhere to plan; must have a substance abuse evaluation – adhere to plan; AA/NA at least 3 times/week; Sign release of information for mental health counseling; follow recommendations of all providers.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing.

Pamela Murphy P.R. 
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

4/27/22
Date