

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



**PAROLE BOARD**

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**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**GEORGE HAGGERTY  
W39898**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** **Review Hearing**

**DATE OF HEARING:** **August 5, 2025**

**DATE OF DECISION:** **January 14, 2026**

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sarah B. Coughlin, Angelo Gomez Jr., James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz<sup>1</sup>

**VOTE:** Parole is granted to Long Term Residential Program 30 days after issuance of decision but not before DA clearance.

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On August 24, 1983, following a jury trial in Hampden Superior Court, Mr. Haggerty was convicted of unarmed robbery, burglary and assault on occupant and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.<sup>2</sup> Parole was denied following an initial hearing in 1997 and review hearings in 2002, 2007, 2012, and 2022.<sup>3</sup>

On August 5, 2025, George Haggerty appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was represented by Attorney Suzanne Renaud. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of George Haggerty's August 5, 2025, hearing.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On June 16, 1982, 29-year-old George Haggerty broke into 82-year-old Ester Owens' home. Mr. Haggerty beat Ms. Owens and stole numerous items from her house. On the night of the burglary, a police officer spoke with Mr. Haggerty and observed his hands were bleeding, there was blood on his pants, and he had two watches in his pockets.

<sup>1</sup> Former Acting Chair Coleman participated in the hearing on this matter but departed the Board prior to the decision.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Haggerty was also convicted of first-degree murder in the death of Ester Owens, but his convictions was vacated on appeal due to trial counsel's ineffectiveness, *Commonwealth v. Haggerty*, 400 Mass. 437 (1987).

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Haggerty postponed his 2017 hearing.

Afterwards, Mr. Haggerty's residence was searched, and police recovered two televisions and two watches belonging to Ms. Owens in the home.

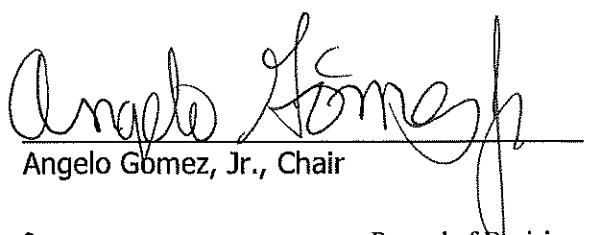
Ms. Owens' jaw was broken in several places, with her eyes and face swollen. She endured several surgeries on her jaw and was returned to intensive care in July when she had an incident of heart failure. She remained in the hospital until she died of a heart attack on August 11, 1982.

**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:** This is Mr. Haggerty's 6<sup>th</sup> appearance before the Board. He is currently 72 years old and has served 43 years. Since the last hearing he engaged in Restorative Justice, Jericho Circle, Violence Reduction, Criminal thinking and Thinking for a change. He has been sober since 1996 and has had no disciplinary reports since 2018. He appeared to benefit from his investment in programming since his last hearing. Mr. Haggerty noted that it took him a long time to invest in self-development. Mr. Haggerty has been employed in the clothing shop and stated he would like to work in the community. The Board considered public testimony noting that two members of the victim's family believed he should be afforded the opportunity for parole. The Board also considered the testimony from Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Lee Baker who spoke in opposition of his parole. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that George Haggerty has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Long-Term Residential Program; Waive work for SSI and/or program; Curfew: must be home between 10pm & 6pm at parole officer's discretion; Electronic monitoring for 6 months; 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 counseling for adjustment; Waive Sex A conditions.

*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.*



Angelo Gomez, Jr., Chair

January 13, 2026

Date