



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

**PAROLE BOARD**

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**Tina Hurley**  
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**Karyn Polito**  
*Lieutenant Governor*

**Terrence Reidy**  
*Secretary*

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**GEORGE ORTIZ**

**W48835**

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

**DATE OF HEARING:**      **August 9, 2022**

**DATE OF DECISION:**      **December 1, 2022**

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS<sup>1</sup>:** Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, James Kelcourse, Colette Santa

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On August 1, 1990, in Suffolk Superior Court, George Ortiz pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of 28-year-old John Stephens<sup>2</sup>. Mr. Ortiz was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.

Mr. Ortiz appeared for a parole review hearing on August 9, 2022. He was represented by student attorneys from Northeastern University School of Law. Mr. Ortiz was paroled after his initial hearing in 2005 but was returned to custody in late 2006. Mr. Ortiz granted parole again after a 2009 review hearing but was returned to custody a second time in 2011. Mr. Ortiz was denied parole after his review hearings in 2014 and 2016. The entire video recording of Mr. Ortiz's August 9, 2022, 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 unanimous vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole.

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<sup>1</sup> Former Chair Gloriann Moroney was recused from this matter and was no longer a board member at the time of the vote.

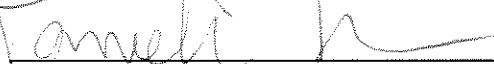
<sup>2</sup> Previous Board decisions reflect the victim was also known as Shawn O'Neil.

Reserve to LTRP after six months in lower security. On March 3, 1990 Mr. Ortiz stabbed 28-year-old John Stephens to death. Mr. Ortiz had two periods of parole supervision with his most recent return in 2011. He has maintained his sobriety and has reinvested in his rehabilitation. He has stayed disciplinary report-free. He works in the Medical Unit and is a companion for others, which he has done for nine years. He has significant community support and presented a thoughtful parole plan that addresses employment, substance abuse, and mental health needs. He intends to pursue a CNA license and continues to pursue his GED. He will benefit from the structure and support of an LTRP like Dismas House.

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. Ortiz'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. Ortiz's risk of recidivism. Applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Ortiz's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that George Ortiz is rehabilitated and, therefore, merits parole at this time.

**Special Conditions:** Reserve to LTRP – must complete; Waive work for program; Curfew at PO's discretion; ELMO-electronic monitoring; 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 and follow recommended treatment; Counseling for adjustment/transition; AA/NA at least 3 times/week.

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

  
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Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

12/1/22  
Date