



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



**PAROLE BOARD**

*12 Mercer Road*  
*Natick, Massachusetts 01760*

**Charles D. Baker**  
*Governor*

**Karyn Polito**  
*Lieutenant Governor*

**Thomas A. Turco III**  
*Secretary*

*Telephone # (508) 650-4500*  
*Facsimile # (508) 650-4599*

**Gloriann Moroney**  
*Chair*

**Kevin Keefe**  
*Executive Director*

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**JONATHAN MEJIA**

**W82532**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** September 24, 2019

**DATE OF DECISION:** March 26, 2020

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

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On October 1, 2003, in Suffolk Superior Court, a jury found Jonathan Mejia guilty of the second-degree murder of John Hammonds. That same day, he was also convicted of unlawful possession of a firearm and unlawful possession of ammunition. Mr. Mejia was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole for the murder of Mr. Hammonds. He also received a concurrent sentence of 3 years to 3 years and 1 day for the firearm conviction. Mr. Mejia was 15-years-old at the time of the murder.

Mr. Mejia, now 33-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on September 24, 2019 and was represented by Attorney Catherine Hinton. Mr. Mejia was denied parole after his review hearing in 2016. The entire video recording of Mr. Mejia's September 24, 2019 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 decision that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole. Reserve to CRJ – transitional housing or a long term residential program, but not after 12 months in lower security. The Board would like to see Mr. Mejia attend the school of re-entry at BPRC. He was 15-years-old when he committed the governing offense. He has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that does not make his release incompatible with the welfare of society.

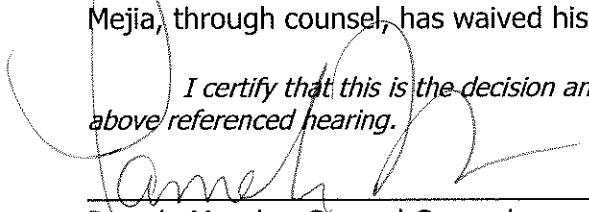
The applicable standard used by the Board to assess a candidate for parole is: "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such offender is released, the offender will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." 120 C.M.R. 300.04. In the context of an offender convicted of first or second degree murder, who was a juvenile at the time the offense was committed, the Board takes into consideration the attributes of youth that distinguish juvenile homicide offenders from similarly situated adult offenders. Consideration of these factors ensures that the parole candidate, who was a juvenile at the time they committed murder, has "a real chance to demonstrate maturity and rehabilitation." *Diatchenko v. District Attorney for the Suffolk District*, 471 Mass. 12, 30 (2015); See also *Commonwealth v. Okoro*, 471 Mass. 51 (2015). The factors considered by the Board include the offender's "lack of maturity and an underdeveloped sense of responsibility, leading to recklessness, impulsivity, and heedless risk-taking; vulnerability to negative influences and outside pressures, including from their family and peers; limited control over their own environment; lack of the ability to extricate themselves from horrific, crime-producing settings; and unique capacity to change as they grow older." *Id.*

In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Mr. Mejia'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. Mejia's risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Mr. Mejia's case, the Board is of the opinion that Mr. Mejia is rehabilitated and merits parole at this time.

**Special Conditions:** Reserve to CRJ – transitional housing or a long term residential program, but not after 12 months in lower security; Waive work for Long Term Residential Program or 2 weeks; Must be at home between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.; 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 substance abuse evaluation - adhere to plan; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment/transition; Long Term Residential Treatment or CRS transitional housing – minimum 6 months.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The above decision is an abbreviated administrative decision issued in an effort to render an expedited resolution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Mejia, through counsel, has waived his right to a full administrative decision.

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date