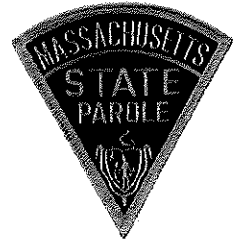


The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

JOSE VELASQUEZ
W64535

TYPE OF HEARING: **Review Hearing**

DATE OF HEARING: **February 6, 2024**

DATE OF DECISION: **May 9, 2024**

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

VOTE: Parole granted to long term residential program two weeks after issuance of decision.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On April 22, 1998, in Hampden Superior Court, Jose Velasquez pleaded guilty to second-degree murder for the death of Maria Nunez. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. Parole was denied following an initial hearing in 2012 and a review hearing in 2017. He postponed his 2022 hearing. On February 6, 2024, Jose Velasquez appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was represented by attorney Deirdre Thurber. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Jose Velasquez's February 6, 2024 hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On July 11, 1997, at approximately 7:30 PM, 52 year old Jose Luis Velasquez was playing dice and drinking beers with about 15 to 20 other men in the backyard of the apartment he shared with his wife, 29 year old Maria Nunez, and their three children. At about 7:35 PM he told the men that he needed to go to his apartment on the third floor because his wife had gotten home, but he would be right back.

When Mr. Velasquez walked into the bedroom, Ms. Nunez began yelling at him. Mr. Velasquez then went into the kitchen, retrieved a large knife, and returned to the bedroom. Once in the bedroom he stabbed his wife multiple times. His stepson intervened and grabbed Mr. Velasquez from behind. Mr. Velasquez broke free of the hold and ran from the bedroom, through the kitchen, and out the back door while still holding the knife. Mr. Velasquez ran down the backstairs and to the men in the backyard. By the time he was approaching the group of men; one of his sons had gone

out onto the porch and began screaming "Daddy killed Mommy". When confronted by one of the men in the group, Mr. Velasquez stated, "I just killed my wife."


Ms. Nunez's cause of death was massive hemorrhage due to multiple stab wounds.

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 incarcerated individual'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 incarcerated individual'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 incarcerated individual at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the incarcerated individual'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 was Jose Velasquez third appearance before the Board. He has been incarcerated for 36 years. Mr. Velasquez has invested in programming since his last hearing to address concerns of the Board. He presented with more insight and remorse. Mr. Velasquez has remained sober for 27 years. He works in the clothing shop where he has been for 22 years. Mr. Velasquez has had only one disciplinary issue. He is now 79 years old and the Board notes he has serious medical issues. The Board considered the re-entry plan that was submitted by his social worker. Mr. Velasquez has been accepted into two programs that can meet his needs. The Board considered testimony provided by social workers and opposition testimony provided by the Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Michael Julian and the sister of the victim via our victim advocate. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Jose Velasquez has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Long term program; Waive work for long term residential program; Must be home between 10 PM and 6 AM at POs discretion; Electronic monitoring at POs 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 substance abuse evaluation and comply with recommended treatment plan; and must complete a psychological evaluation to determine specific needs.

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

5/9/24
Date