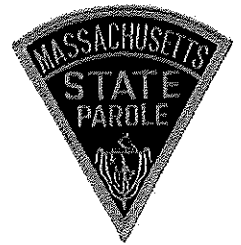


*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*

**PAROLE BOARD**

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*Executive Director*

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**JOSHUA NILSSON**  
**W89510**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Initial Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** December 4, 2024

**DATE OF DECISION:** March 31, 2025

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

**VOTE:** Parole is granted after 9 months in lower security to a VA Residential Program, but not before DA clearance.<sup>1</sup>

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On March 20, 2007, in Hampden Superior Court, Joshua Nilsson pleaded guilty to second degree murder for the death of Theresa Sevigny. He was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.<sup>2</sup> On that same date, Mr. Nilsson also pleaded guilty to malicious damage to property and received a 9 to 10 year from and after sentence.<sup>3</sup> A charge of rape was dismissed by the Commonwealth. On December 4, 2024, Joshua Nilsson appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was represented by Attorney John Ferrara. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Joshua Nilsson's December 4, 2024, hearing.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On January 7, 2006, in Westfield, 24-year-old Joshua Nilsson strangled and killed his former girlfriend, 28-year-old Theresa Sevigny. Ms. Sevigny lived on the first floor of the home, while Mr. Nilsson resided on the second floor. Ms. Sevigny had ordered

<sup>1</sup> Two Board Members voted to deny parole with a review in 2 years.

<sup>2</sup> Sandiford v. Massachusetts Parole Board, the Parole Board agreed to change its calculation of parole eligibility such that good conduct deductions are available to all persons serving life sentences with consecutive non-life sentences subject to certain statutory limitations.

<sup>3</sup> Dinkins & another v. Massachusetts Parole Board, SJC-12882 (January 19, 2021), the Parole Board will aggregate parole eligible life terms that are first in a series with from and after terms for purposes of determining the parole eligibility date

Mr. Nilsson to leave the home due to a suspicion that he was stealing her mail. Joshua Nilsson was home when the police arrived and could not provide any account for his time of the murder. Ms. Sevigny's body was found in Mr. Nilsson's bedroom.


**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 was Mr. Nilsson's first appearance before the Board. Mr. Nilsson is 42-years-old; he has served 19 years. He has invested in treatment for Domestic Violence, Substance Use, Mental Health, and Education. Mr. Nilsson is a Marine Corp veteran and was diagnosed with PTSD following his service. Mr. Nilsson was insightful about the relationship between his mental health issues, substance use, and this offense. Mr. Nilsson also gained insight into his pattern of domestic violence and the harm he has caused. Mr. Nilsson benefitted from Restorative Justice and programming that addressed his needs. The Board considered the expert evaluation by Dr. Long in understanding such needs and recommendations for treatment. Mr. Nilsson gained his BA from Boston University. He also gained vocational skills in Welding and Optical Services. Mr. Nilsson has a significant support system and proposed a release plan that will meet his ongoing needs. The Board notes Mr. Nilsson is over 16 years sober. The Board considered public testimony from family members and a friend of Mr. Nilsson in support of parole. The Board also considered the testimony and letters of numerous close family members of Ms. Sevigny in opposition to Parole, as well as the testimony of Assistant District Attorney Michael Julian. The Board concludes that Joshua Nilsson has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Approve home plan before release; Waive work for 2 weeks; 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; Veteran's Program; May have contact with daughter at PO discretion; No contact victim(s)' family; Must have mental health counseling for trauma and PTSD; and AA at least 3 times per week.

*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

  
Date