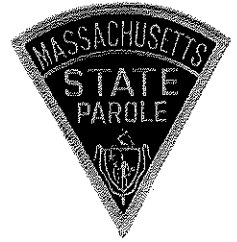


*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*

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*Natick, Massachusetts 01760*



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**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**JUAN FIGUEROA**  
**W93992**

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

**DATE OF HEARING:**       **January 9, 2024**

**DATE OF DECISION:**      **March 12, 2024**

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

**VOTE:** Parole is granted to CRJ after 9 months in lower security.

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On March 10, 2009, following a jury trial in Suffolk County Superior Court, Juan Figueroa was found guilty of second-degree murder in the death of John Austin. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he was convicted of assault and battery by means of dangerous weapon and received a 3-to-5-year concurrent sentence.

Parole was denied after an initial hearing in 2022. On January 9, 2024, Juan Figueroa appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was represented by Harvard Law School student attorneys Kaiya McCullough and Nelson Reed, who were supervised by Attorney Joel Thompson. The Board's decision fully incorporates, by reference, the entire video recording of Mr. Figueroa's January 9, 2024 hearing.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On March 11, 2007, 23-year-old Juan Figueroa murdered 24-year-old John Austin. At the time, Mr. Austin shared custody of a 3-year-old boy with Mr. Figueroa's girlfriend. On the day of the murder, Mr. Figueroa and his girlfriend drove to Mr. Austin's house to pick up her child. After putting the child into his car seat, Mr. Figueroa stated that Mr. Austin "needed to be a better father." A physical fight ensued between the two men, and Mr. Austin drew a knife on Mr. Figueroa. Mr. Figueroa disarmed Mr. Austin and then repeatedly stabbed him with the knife. As Mr. Austin lay bleeding on the sidewalk, Mr. Figueroa

drove off with his girlfriend and her child. Mr. Austin was taken by ambulance to the hospital, where he died from his stab wounds. Mr. Figueroa was later arrested at his brother's house.

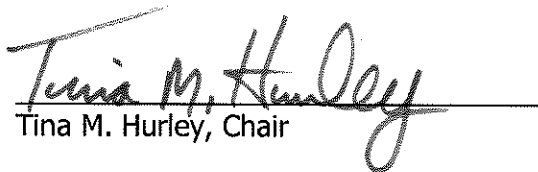
**APPLICABLE STANDARD:** Parole "[p]ermits shall be granted only if the board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and 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:** Since Mr. Figueroa's last appearance before the Board, Mr. Figueroa has enrolled in classes through Mount Wachusett Community College. He indicated to the Board that he wishes to work in the hospitality industry. He has maintained employment through janitorial services while at MCI-Shirley. During his incarceration, he has completed over 50 programs. He has begun mental health counseling and established pathways to community supports. Mr. Figueroa's cousin, foster father, and others provided testimony and letters of support. Suffolk County ADA Montez Haywood took no position. The victim's family and friends spoke in opposition.

The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Juan Figueroa has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Waive work for 2 weeks; Must be at home between 10PM and 6AM or at parole officer's discretion; Electronic monitoring at parole officer's discretion; Must take prescribed medication; 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 must comply with recommended treatment; Counseling; Residential program - CRJ Program.

*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