



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

12 Mercer Road
Natick, Massachusetts 01760



Tina M. Hurley
Chair

Maura Healey
Governor

Kim Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Terrence Reidy
Secretary

Telephone # (508) 650-4500

Facsimile # (508) 650-4599

RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

LOUIS GOFORTH

W35249

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: December 8, 2022

DATE OF DECISION: January 26, 2023

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Dr. Maryanne Galvin, James Kelcourse, Colette Santa

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On November 24, 1975, in Suffolk Superior Court, Louis Goforth pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of Gabriel Peters. On that same date, for his involvement in the robbery and murder of Joseph Bardsley, he also received a 10 to 15-year sentence for armed robbery, a 5 to 7-year sentence for accessory after the fact to murder, and a 2.5 to 3-year sentence for larceny from a person. All sentences were ordered to run concurrently with one another.

Mr. Goforth appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on December 8, 2022. He was represented by student attorneys from Boston College Law School. Mr. Goforth was denied parole after his 1989 initial hearing. He was released on parole in 1991 but was returned to custody for violation of his conditions. Mr. Goforth was subsequently denied parole in 1993, 1995, 1997, and 1999, before receiving his second positive parole vote in 2003. He violated parole in 2007, resulting in another return to custody. He was denied parole at his 2014 and 2019 review hearings. The entire video recording of Mr. Goforth's December 8, 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.

Reserve to Community Resources for Justice (CRJ.) On July 8, 1974, 23-year-old Mr. Goforth and his codefendants shot and killed two men. He has been back in custody for approximately fifteen years. He accepts responsibility for the underlying offense and for his parole violations. He has been employed in the Clothing Shop for approximately nine years. He has participated in Jericho Circle, Lifers Group, Correctional Recovery Academy, AA/NA, and Restorative Justice. Mr. Goforth suffers from multiple serious medical issues. Mr. Goforth is 71 years old and has developed a strong support network and parole plan.

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

Special Conditions: Reserve to Community Resources for Justice (CRJ); Waive work for disability; Curfew – Must be at home between 10pm and 6am; 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; No contact with victim(s); Must have substance abuse evaluation and follow recommended treatment; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment/transition.

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

/s/ Pamela Murphy p.p. Courtney E. Doherty
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

1/26/23
Date