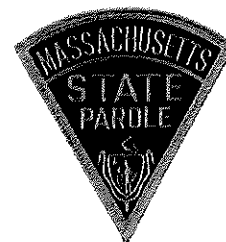




*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*

**PAROLE BOARD**

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*Natick, Massachusetts 01760*



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*Chair*

**Lian Hogan**  
*Executive Director*

**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**MICHAEL MARPLE**

**W41130**

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

**DATE OF HEARING:** **September 17, 2024**

**DATE OF DECISION:** **December 11, 2024**

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

**VOTE:** Parole is granted two weeks from the date of decision to Gavin House.

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On April 17, 1986, 32-year-old Michael Marple was found guilty of murder in the second degree following a jury trial in Norfolk Superior Court. Mr. Marple was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole for killing 31-year-old John Blais.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Marple was denied parole after his hearings in 2002, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021. On September 17, 2024, Mr. Marple appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was represented by Attorney Timothy Foley. The Board fully incorporates, by reference, the entire video recording of Mr. Marple's hearing on September 17, 2024.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** Michael Marple, Stephen Haynes, and John Blais were inmates at MCI-Cedar Junction.<sup>2</sup> On April 13, 1984, Mr. Marple and Mr. Haynes attacked Mr. Blais on a stairwell landing by strangling him and beating him with a pipe. Mr. Haynes held Mr. Blais, while Mr. Marple beat him. During the beating, Mr. Marple repeatedly asked Mr. Blais, "Where are the

<sup>1</sup> The co-defendant pleaded guilty to manslaughter just prior to jury impanelment.

<sup>2</sup> On January 19, 1981, while serving a sentence in Connecticut, Mr. Marple was convicted of second-degree assault and battery on a corrections officer. Mr. Marple was identified as a security threat and was subsequently transferred to the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction.

ludes (a reference to drugs)?" Mr. Blais did not reply. After the beating, Mr. Marple and Mr. Haynes threw Mr. Blais down a flight of stairs. A correctional officer later discovered Mr. Blais' body with a cloth garrote around his neck. Mr. Blais died as a result of strangulation.

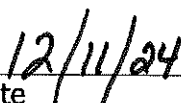
**APPLICABLE STANDARD:** Parole shall be granted "only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." G. L. c. 127, § 130. The Board considers multiple factors in making its decision, including the incarcerated individual's institutional behavior; their participation in available work, education, and treatment programs during their incarceration; and whether the incarcerated individual's chances of recidivism could be reduced by participation in risk reduction programs. G. L. c. 127, § 130. The Board considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the incarcerated individual at the time of the offense, the entirety of the incarcerated individual's criminal record, the incarcerated individual's institutional record, the incarcerated individual's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public expressed at the hearing and/or in written submission to the Board.

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** Mr. Marple appeared before the Board for the 6<sup>th</sup> time. He is 71-years-old. Mr. Marple has addressed the concerns voiced by the Board at his prior hearings. He scores medium risk on the LSCMI risk assessment tool. Mr. Marple has been disciplinary report free since his last hearing. He has completed Criminal Thinking and Gateway to Treatment since his last hearing. He is employed as a cleaner in the Utilities Department. Mr. Marple presented a comprehensive re-entry plan to address his needs. The Board notes that due to DOC Classification restrictions, Mr. Marple is unable to transition through lower security. The Board considered opposition testimony from Norfolk Assistant District Attorney Laura McLaughlin. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Mr. Marple has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Long-Term Residential Treatment; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; Waive work for program; Electronic monitoring for 6 months; Supervise for drugs with testing in accordance with Agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence with testing in accordance with Agency policy; No contact with victim(s)' family; Counseling for adjustment; Attend AA at least 3 times per week; Attend NA at least 3 times per week; Allow association with Jeff Mulvey, Dennis Harrington, and Scott Sanders.

*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