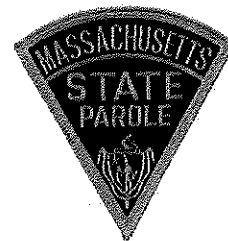




The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

RUBEN SANCHEZ
W98986

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: August 27, 2024

DATE OF DECISION: February 6, 2025

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman,¹ Sarah B. Coughlin,² Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in two years from the date of the hearing.³

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On July 1, 2011, following a jury trial in Suffolk Superior Court, Ruben Sanchez was found guilty of second-degree murder in the death of 18-year-old Paula Castillo. On July 6, 2011, he was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he was sentenced to 4 - 5 years in state prison, to be served concurrently for unlawful possession of a firearm, and was sentenced to a term of 5 years of probation for carrying a loaded firearm, to be served from and after his term of incarceration.

On August 27, 2024, Mr. Sanchez appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was represented by Attorney Lorenzo Perez. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Ruben Sanchez's August 27, 2024, hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: In the early morning hours of September 20, 2009, 19-year-old Ruben Sanchez shot and killed Paula Castillo at a Hyde Park apartment after he and his two codefendants were ejected from her 18th birthday party. After being asked to leave, Mr. Sanchez and his codefendants engaged in a verbal dispute with partygoers as the three men exited the

¹ Board Member Coleman was not present for the entirety of the hearing but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the file prior to participating in the vote.

² Board Member Coughlin was not present for the entirety of the hearing but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the file prior to participating in the vote.

³ Two Board Members voted to deny with a review in three years.

apartment and proceeded towards their vehicle. Mr. Sanchez pulled out a silver-colored firearm and fired multiple rounds in the direction of the apartment. As the three men fled in the vehicle, Mr. Sanchez, who was seated in the front passenger seat, fired one additional round. One of the bullets struck Paula Castillo, who was leaning out of the second-floor hallway window. Ms. Castillo, who was four months pregnant, sustained a gunshot wound under the collarbone and quickly succumbed to her injury.

Within approximately ten minutes of the shooting, Mr. Sanchez and his codefendants were stopped in the motor vehicle in which they fled the scene. They were transported to an area police station, where they were interviewed and released. Investigators seized and searched the vehicle pursuant to a search warrant. They recovered a silver-colored revolver in the trunk. The firearm had been wrapped in a t-shirt and concealed behind a speaker.

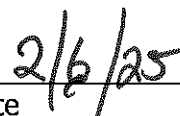
APPLICABLE STANDARD: Parole “[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain 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. Sanchez’s initial appearance before the Board. The Board considered Mr. Sanchez’s age at the time of the offense and the development of the emerging adult brain. He is currently medium-risk on the LS-CMI risk assessment tool. The DOC (Department of Correction) has accepted his disassociation from Security Threat Group (STG) membership. Mr. Sanchez has completed numerous programs, including Criminal Thinking and Jericho’s Circle, earned his Hi-Set in 2017, and is enrolled in MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment). However, Mr. Sanchez has a significant number of disciplinary reports, including a 2022 disciplinary report for introducing drugs to a facility, two DDU (Department Disciplinary Unit) commitments due to STG related incidents, two returns to higher custody, and multiple BAU (Behavior Assessment Unit) and SMU (Special Management Unit) placements. He had a pending disciplinary report at the time of his hearing. His length of sobriety is less than two years. The Board considered the testimony of Social Worker Lauren Bishop.

Mr. Sanchez had multiple supporters. Three members of the victim’s family and Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Montez Haywood spoke in opposition.

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