

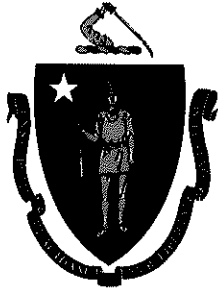
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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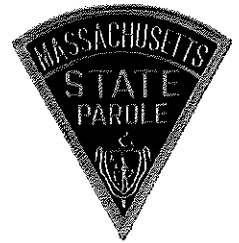
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Kimberley Driscoll
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Secretary



Tina M. Hurley
Chair

Lian Hogan
Executive Director

RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

WHITNEY BASKIN
W91255

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 28, 2024

DATE OF DECISION: August 20, 2024

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

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in two years from the date of the hearing.¹

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On December 21, 2007, following a jury trial in Suffolk Superior Court, Whitney Baskin was convicted of murder in the second degree in the death of his estranged wife, Velveena Baskin. He was subsequently sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On May 28, 2024, Mr. Baskin appeared before the Board for an initial hearing.² He was represented by Attorney Deirdre Thurber. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Mr. Baskin's May 28, 2024 hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On April 15, 2006, Whitney Baskin (age 46) went to the home of his estranged wife, Velveena Baskin (age 38) to visit his stepchildren and prepare for Easter dinner the next day. At some point, Mr. Baskin asked to speak with Ms. Baskin in her bedroom. The pair went into the room and closed the door. Approximately 10 minutes later, Mr. Baskin exited the bedroom, took Ms. Baskin's car keys, and left the residence. Ms. Baskin's daughters then went to check on their mother, but found her bedroom door locked and loud music coming

¹ Three Board Members voted to parole Mr. Baskin.

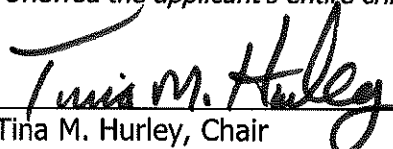
² Mr. Baskin elected to postpone his 2021 hearing.

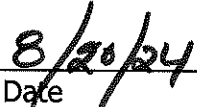
from inside. After yelling and banging on the door to no avail, the girls accessed the room through another door and found their mother lying face down on the bed with her legs on the floor. She had no clothing on from the waist down. Ms. Baskin's face was covered in blood, and she was not breathing, so her daughters called for an ambulance. Ms. Baskin was transported to the hospital, but ultimately died of skull fractures and brain contusions. The following day, Mr. Baskin was arrested by police after being found driving Ms. Baskin's car near her home.

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: Mr. Baskin is 64 years old and is before the Board for his initial hearing after his conviction for the murder of his wife when he was 46 years old. The Board reviewed the forensic evaluation of Dr. Kerry Nelligan. Mr. Baskin completed SOTP in 2022. Mr. Baskin provided limited insight into his behaviors, especially his sexual offenses. The Board recommends that Mr. Baskin engage in programming through the RTU, especially any programs related to victim empathy and healthy relationships. The Board also notes that he should continue mental health treatment and programming to address substance use. The Board considered the opposition to parole from the victim's family.

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