

**Maura T. Healey**  
Governor

**Kimberley Driscoll**  
Lieutenant Governor

**Terrence M. Reidy**  
Secretary

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

**PAROLE BOARD**

*12 Mercer Road*  
*Natick, Massachusetts 01760*

*Telephone: (508)-650-4500*

*Facsimile: (508)-650-4599*



**Tina M. Hurley**  
Chair

**Lian Hogan**  
Executive Director

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**WILLIAM SYLVIA**  
**W61782**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** December 19, 2023

**DATE OF DECISION:** March 13, 2024

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse<sup>1</sup>

**VOTE:** Parole is granted to VA (Veteran's Affairs) program after 6 mo[nth] stepdown in lower security.

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On December 16, 1996, in Bristol Superior Court, William Sylvia pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of Kristine Sylvia and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. He also pleaded guilty to three counts of unlawful possession of a firearm, for which he received 3 to 5 year concurrent sentences.

Mr. Sylvia appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on December 19, 2023. He was represented by Attorney Chetan Tiwari. Mr. Sylvia was denied parole after his 2009 initial hearing and after his review hearings in 2012, 2017, and 2022. The Board's decision fully incorporates, by reference, the entire video recording of Mr. Sylvia's December 19, 2023 hearing.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On December 17, 1994, at around 3:00 p.m., Kristine Sylvia was at her boyfriend's apartment when her estranged husband, William Sylvia (age 48), knocked on the door, armed with three handguns. When Ms. Sylvia answered the door, Mr. Sylvia shot her using all the ammunition in one gun, and then, shot her several more times with a second gun

---

<sup>1</sup> Board Members Alexander and Coughlin were not present at the hearing, but reviewed the recorded hearing and the entire file prior to vote.

before fleeing. Ms. Sylvia was taken to the hospital, where she was pronounced dead. A witness at the apartment identified William Sylvia as the shooter.

Later in the evening, Mr. Sylvia's vehicle was pulled over, and he was arrested. Police found three loaded hand guns and a bag full of ammunition in his vehicle.

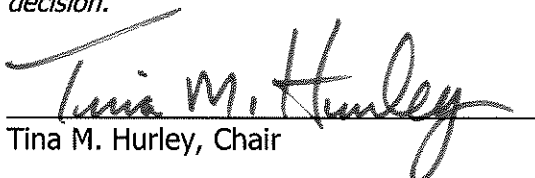
**APPLICABLE STANDARD:** Parole "[p]ermits shall be granted only if the board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and 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.


**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** Mr. Sylvia has had a remarkable history of institutional adjustment with no disciplinary reports. He scores low risk on the LS/CMI risk assessment tool. He completed Victim Impact in May 2023. He is 77-years-old and has been incarcerated for over 25 years. At Mr. Sylvia's last hearing, the Board had concerns regarding Mr. Sylvia's cognitive deficits and, what appeared to be, issues of confusion. At this hearing, Mr. Sylvia presented as less overwhelmed and noted the assistance of hearing aids. Mr. Sylvia has been deemed eligible for assistance through the Department of Veterans Affairs to help with his medical, mental health, and adjustment needs through the Health Care for Re-entry Veterans program. ADA Jason Mahan of Bristol County expressed concerns regarding Mr. Sylvia's mental health and evaluation needs. Mr. Sylvia's brother submitted a letter in support.

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

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Waive work for 2 weeks or disability; Must be at home between 10 pm and 6 am or at P.O.'s discretion; Electronic monitoring at P.O.'s discretion; 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 follow any recommended treatment plan; Counseling for PTSD and transition; V.A. 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