ELLIOT KOLKOVICH
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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CONTACT: Elaine Vilem / Lily Cowie
(330) 643-8386

STATEMENT ON THE PAROLE OF CLINTON DICKENS

AKRON, OH – The Summit County Prosecutor's Office has received multiple inquiries about the parole hearing currently scheduled for this month for Clinton Dickens. Dickens was convicted alongside his co-defendant Richard Cooey for the murders of Wendy Offredo and Dawn McCreery. Wendy and Dawn were beloved members of the community and students at the University of Akron when they were brutally murdered in 1986. Cooey was executed for this crime on October 14, 2008.

Under the procedures of parole hearings, the Prosecutor's Office is only allowed to observe Dickens' upcoming parole hearing but cannot provide a position or even comment during the proceedings.

Concerned community members can always provide input regarding consideration of an inmate's release to the Ohio Parole Board via their **website**.

A Brief Overview of the Parole Process in Ohio

A 'first hearing' occurs the first time an inmate becomes eligible for parole consideration. At the 'first hearing', the Parole Board may recommend the individual for release or deny parole at that time. Parole board members consider factors including the inmate's behavior during prison, programming the inmate has participated in, the inmate's reentry plan, the impact on the victim, and the risk to public safety. The timeline of a decision being rendered varies from case to case and may not occur the same day as the first hearing.

If an inmate is recommended for release following a first hearing, either the victim, an immediate family member of the victim, or the prosecutor may file a petition for a full board hearing, which the parole board will schedule approximately 60 days later. At the full board hearing, the Prosecutor's Office can participate and provide a statement of opposition. The victim or victim's family can also be present and make a statement at the full board hearing. After hearing from all parties, including the inmate's attorney and supporters, the parole board members vote and return with a decision—typically that same day.

Even if the inmate is granted parole, they will not be released immediately. Release will be scheduled and follow the inmate's reentry plan that was approved by the parole board.

The public may observe full board hearings via livestream **here**, but they are not physically open to the public.

If the board denies parole after either the first hearing or the full board hearing, the board will continue the hearing for one to ten years. When the board does not recommend release after the ‘first hearing,’ any subsequent hearing is a ‘continued hearing.’

In the present case, Dickens’ ‘first hearing’ was in January 2022. In April 2022, the parole board issued its decision denying Dickens’ parole and continued his parole process to the upcoming ‘continued hearing.’ The parole board may once again deny parole at this time, or may recommend Dickens for release. Should Dickens be recommended for release, the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office will work with Dawn and Wendy’s families to petition for a full board hearing.

The full, official Parole Board Handbook can be reviewed **here**.

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