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## Administrative Appeal Decision - Dimick, Duane S (2019-06-28)

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## ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL DECISION NOTICE

Name:	Dimick, Du	uane	Facility:	Fishkill CF		
NYSID:			Appeal Control No.:	09-003-18 B		
DIN:	95-B-1022					
Appearances:		Joseph Petito Esq. 2 Austin Court Poughkeepsie, New Y	York 12603			
Decision appealed:		August 2018 decision, denying discretionary release and imposing a hold of 24 months.				
<u>Board Me</u> who parti		Crangle, Smith, Berli	iner			
Papers considered:		Appellant's Brief received April 4, 2019				
Appeals U	<u>Unit Review</u> :	Statement of the App	eals Unit's Find	ings and Recommendation		
<u>Records r</u>	relied upon:		<b>v</b> 1 /	arole Board Report, Interview Transcript, Parole 1 9026), COMPAS instrument, Offender Case		
Final Det	ermination:	The undersigned dete	ermine that the d	ecision appealed is hereby:		
JA	4	Affirmed Va	cated, remanded fo	or de novo interview Modified to		
	missioner	Affirmed Va	cated, remanded fo	or de novo interview Modified to		
Comr	nissioner	AffirmedVa	cated, remanded fo	or de novo interview Modified to		

# If the Final Determination is at variance with Findings and Recommendation of Appeals Unit, written reasons for the Parole Board's determination <u>must</u> be annexed hereto.

This Final Determination, the related Statement of the Appeals Unit's Findings and the separate findings of the Parole Board, if any, were mailed to the Inmate and the Inmate's Counsel, if any, on <u>CASIM 66</u>.

Distribution: Appeals Unit – Appellant - Appellant's Counsel - Inst. Parole File - Central File P-2002(B) (11/2018)

## APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

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Appellant challenges the August 2018 determination of the Board, denying release and imposing a 24-month hold. Appellant's instant offense involved him and co-defendants repeatedly stabbing, beating and choking a woman to death, and then stealing money and a car from the victim and fleeing out of state. Appellant raises the following issues: 1) the decision is arbitrary and capricious, and irrational bordering on impropriety, in that the Board failed to consider and/or properly weigh the required statutory factors. 2) the decision illegally resentenced him. 3) the decision lacks details. 4) the decision failed to cite any factors in support of the standards relied upon. 5) the decision lacks future guidance. 6) the decision violated the due process clause of the constitution. 7) one Commissioner should have been disqualified because he was part of a prior interview panel. 8) the interview process is defective per se, per former Board Commissioner Manley. 9) references to YO or JO matters is prohibited. 10) the unspecified guidelines score found at 9 N.Y.C.R.R. 8001 is illegal. 11) the Board failed to comply with the 2011 amendments to the Executive Law, and the 2017 regulations of the Board, in that no written procedures exist, no reason for departing from the COMPAS was given, and the laws are now future based. 12) the 24 month hold is excessive.

Discretionary release to parole is not to be granted "merely as a reward for good conduct or efficient performance of duties while confined but after considering if there is a reasonable probability that, if such inmate is released, he will live and remain at liberty without violating the law, and that his release is not incompatible with the welfare of society and will not so deprecate the seriousness of his crime as to undermine respect for the law." Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A) (emphasis added); accord Matter of Hamilton v. New York State Div. of Parole, 119 A.D.3d 1268, 990 N.Y.S.2d 714 (3d Dept. 2014). Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A) requires the Board to consider criteria which is relevant to the specific inmate, including, but not limited to, the inmate's institutional record and criminal behavior. People ex rel. Herbert v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881 (1st Dept. 1983). While consideration of these factors is mandatory, "the ultimate decision to parole a prisoner is discretionary." Matter of Silmon v. Travis, 95 N.Y.2d 470, 477, 718 N.Y.S.2d 704, 708 (2000). Thus, it is well settled that the weight to be accorded the requisite factors is solely within the Board's discretion. See, e.g., Matter of Delacruz v. Annucci, 122 A.D.3d 1413, 997 N.Y.S.2d 872 (4th Dept. 2014); Matter of Hamilton, 119 A.D.3d at 1271, 990 N.Y.S.2d at 717; Matter of Garcia v. New York State Div. of Parole, 239 A.D.2d 235, 239, 657 N.Y.S.2d 415, 418 (1st Dept. 1997). The Board need not explicitly refer to each factor in its decision, nor give them equal weight. Matter of Betancourt v. Stanford, 148 A.D.3d 1497, 49 N.Y.S.3d 315 (3d Dept. 2017); Matter of LeGeros v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 139 A.D.3d 1068, 30 N.Y.S.3d 834 (2d Dept. 2016); Matter of Phillips v. Dennison, 41 A.D.3d 17, 21, 834 N.Y.S.2d 121, 124 (1st Dept. 2007).

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The Board is permitted to consider, and place greater emphasis on, the brutal and heinous nature of the offense. Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(a); <u>Matter of Applegate v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 164 A.D.3d 996, 997, 82 N.Y.S.3d 240 (3d Dept. 2018); <u>Matter of Olmosperez v. Evans</u>, 114 A.D.3d 1077, 1078, 980 N.Y.S.2d 845, 846 (3d Dept. 2014), <u>affd 26 N.Y.3d 1014</u>, 21 N.Y.S.3d 686 (2015); <u>Matter of Almeyda v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 290 A.D.2d 505, 736 N.Y.S.2d 275 (2d Dept. 2002); <u>Matter of Garcia v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 239 A.D.2d 235, 239-40, 657 N.Y.S.2d 415, 418 (1st Dept. 1997).

That the Board found Appellant's postconviction activities outweighed by the serious nature of his crimes does not constitute convincing evidence that the Board did not consider them, see <u>Matter</u> of McLain v. New York State Div. of Parole, 204 A.D.2d 456, 611 N.Y.S.2d 629 (2d Dept. 1994), or render the decision irrational, see <u>Matter of Garcia v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 239 A.D.2d 235, 239-40, 657 N.Y.S.2d 415, 418 (1st Dept. 1997).

The Board may take note of the inmate's disregard for the life of another human being. <u>Hakim v</u> <u>Travis</u>, 302 A.D.2d 821, 754 N.Y.S.2d 600 (3d Dept 2003); <u>Angel v Travis</u>, 1 A.D.3d 589, 767 N.Y.S.2d 290 (3d Dept 2003).

The fact that the Board afforded greater weight to the inmate's criminal history, as opposed to other positive factors, does not render the denial of parole for that reason irrational or improper. <u>Matter of Davis v. Evans</u>, 105 A.D.3d 1305, 963 N.Y.S.2d 485 (3d Dept. 2013); <u>Matter of Lashway v. Evans</u>, 110 A.D.3d 1417, 1418, 974 N.Y.S.2d 164, 165 (3d Dept. 2013); <u>Matter of McKee v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 157 A.D.2d 944, 550 N.Y.S.2d 204 (3d Dept. 1990).

The Board permissibly considered letters in opposition to the parole application submitted by public officials and members of the community. <u>Matter of Clark v. New York Bd. of Parole</u>, 166 A.D.3d 531, 89 N.Y.S.3d 134 (1st Dept. 2018).

The Board may consider an inmate's need to complete rehabilitative programming in denying parole. <u>See Matter of Allen v. Stanford</u>, 161 A.D.3d 1503, 1506, 78 N.Y.S.3d 445 (3d Dept.), <u>lv.</u> denied, 32 N.Y.3d 903 (2018); <u>Matter of Barrett v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 242 A.D.2d 763, 661 N.Y.S.2d 857 (3d Dept. 1997); <u>see also Matter of Connelly v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 286 A.D.2d 792, 729 N.Y.S.2d 808, 809 (3d Dept.), <u>appeal dismissed</u> 97 N.Y.2d 677, 738 N.Y.S.2d 291 (2001).

The Board may consider negative aspects of the COMPAS instrument. <u>Matter of Bush v.</u> <u>Annucci</u>, 148 A.D.3d 1392, 50 N.Y.S.3d 180 (3d Dept. 2017) (COMPAS instrument with mixed results including substance abuse relevant given use before crime); <u>Matter of Wade v. Stanford</u>, 148 A.D.3d 1487, 52 N.Y.S.3d 508 (3d Dept. 2017) (low risk felony violence but probable risk for substance abuse alcohol related crimes); <u>Matter of Crawford v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 144

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A.D.3d 1308, 46 N.Y.S.3d 228 (3d Dept. 2016) (scores not uniformly low including family support), <u>lv. denied</u>, 29 N.Y.3d 901, 57 N.Y.S.3d 704 (2017).

That the Board "did not recite the precise statutory language of Executive Law § 259-i (2)(c)(A) in support of its conclusion to deny parole does not undermine its conclusion." <u>Matter of Mullins v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 136 A.D.3d 1141, 1142, 25 N.Y.S.3d 698 (3d Dept. 2016) (citation omitted); <u>accord Matter of Reed v. Evans</u>, 94 A.D.3d 1323, 942 N.Y.S.2d 387 (3d Dept. 2012). The language used by the Board was "only semantically different" from the statute. <u>Matter of Miller v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 72 A.D.3d 690, 691–92, 897 N.Y.S.2d 726, 727 (2d Dept. 2010); <u>Matter of James v. Chairman of New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 19 A.D.3d 857, 858, 796 N.Y.S.2d 735, 736 (3d Dept. 2005); <u>see also People ex rel. Herbert v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881 (1st Dept. 1983) (upholding decision that denied release as "contrary to the best interest of the community").

The Board's decision satisfied the criteria set out in Executive Law § 259-i(2)(a), as it was sufficiently detailed to inform the inmate of the reasons for the denial of parole. <u>Matter of Applegate v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 164 A.D.3d 996, 997, 82 N.Y.S.3d 240 (3d Dept. 2018); <u>Matter of Kozlowski v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 108 A.D.3d 435, 968 N.Y.S.2d 87 (1st Dept. 2013); <u>Matter of Little v. Travis</u>, 15 A.D.3d 698, 788 N.Y.S.2d 628 (3d Dept. 2005); <u>Matter of Davis v. Travis</u>, 292 A.D.2d 742, 739 N.Y.S.2d 300 (3d Dept. 2002); <u>People ex rel. Herbert v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881 (1st Dept. 1983).

As for Appellant's complaint about lack of future guidance, the Board is not required to state what an inmate should do to improve his chances for parole in the future. <u>Matter of Francis v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 89 A.D.3d 1312, 934 N.Y.S.2d 514 (3d Dept. 2011); <u>Matter of Freeman v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 21 A.D.3d 1174, 800 N.Y.S.2d 797 (3d Dept. 2005); <u>Matter of Partee v. Evans</u>, 40 Misc.3d 896, 969 N.Y.S.2d 733 (Sup. Ct. Albany Co. 2013), <u>aff'd</u>, 117 A.D.3d 1258, 984 N.Y.S.2d 894 (3d Dept. 2014), <u>lv. denied</u>, 24 N.Y.3d 901, 995 N.Y.S.2d 710 (2014).

Appellant's assertion that the denial of parole release amounted to an improper resentencing is without merit inasmuch as the Board fulfilled its obligation to determine the propriety of release per Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A) and after considering the factors set forth therein. Executive Law § 259 et seq.; Penal Law § 70.40; <u>Matter of Murray v. Evans</u>, 83 A.D.3d 1320, 920 N.Y.S.2d 745 (3d Dept. 2011); <u>Matter of Crews v. New York State Exec. Dept. Bd. of Parole Appeals Unit</u>, 281 A.D.2d 672, 720 N.Y.S.2d 855 (3d Dept. 2001). The Board was vested with discretion to determine whether release was appropriate notwithstanding the minimum period of incarceration set by the Court. <u>Matter of Burress v. Dennison</u>, 37 A.D.3d 930, 829 N.Y.S.2d 283 (3d Dept. 2007); <u>Matter of Cody v. Dennison</u>, 33 A.D.3d 1141, 1142, 822 N.Y.S.2d 677 (3d Dept. 2006), <u>lv. denied</u>, 8 N.Y.3d 802, 830 N.Y.S.2d 698 (2007). The appellant has not in any manner been

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resentenced. <u>Matter of Mullins v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 136 A.D.3d 1141, 1142, 25 N.Y.S.3d 698 (3d Dept. 2016).

An inmate has no Constitutional right to be conditionally released on parole before expiration of a valid sentence. <u>Greenholtz v. Inmates of Nebraska Penal & Correctional Complex</u>, 442 U.S. 1, 99 S. Ct. 2100, 2104 (1979); <u>Matter of Russo v. Bd. of Parole</u>, 50 N.Y.2d 69, 427 N.Y.S.2d 982 (1980); <u>Matter of Vineski v. Travis</u>, 244 A.D.2d 737, 664 N.Y.S.2d 391 (3d Dept. 1997). The New York State parole scheme "holds out no more than a possibility of parole" and thus does not create a protected liberty interest implicating the due process clause. <u>Matter of Russo</u>, 50 N.Y.2d at 75-76, 427 N.Y.S.2d at 985; <u>see also Barna v. Travis</u>, 239 F.3d 169, 171 (2d Cir. 2001); <u>Matter of Freeman v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 21 A.D.3d 1174, 800 N.Y.S.2d 797 (3d Dept. 2005). That the inmate has served his minimum sentence does not give him a protected liberty interest in parole release. <u>Matter of Russo v. Bd. of Parole</u>, 50 N.Y.2d 69, 427 N.Y.S.2d 982 (1980); <u>Matter of Motti v. Alexander</u>, 54 A.D.3d 114, 115, 863 N.Y.S.2d 839, 839-40 (3d Dept. 2008); <u>Matter of Warren v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 307 A.D.2d 493, 493, 761 N.Y.S.2d 883, 883 (3d Dept. 2003); <u>Matter of Vineski v. Travis</u>, 244 A.D.2d 737, 664 N.Y.S.2d 391 (3d Dept. 1997).

Nothing in the due process clause requires the Parole Board to specify the particular evidence on which rests the discretionary determination an inmate is not ready for conditional release. <u>Duemmel v Fischer</u>, 368 Fed.Appx. 180, 182 (2d Cir. 2010). There is no due process requirement that the Parole Board disclose its release criteria. <u>Haymes v Regan</u>, 525 F.2d 540 (2d Cir. 1975). The due process clause is not violated by the Board's balancing of the statutory criteria, and which is not to be second guessed by the courts. <u>Mathie v Dennison</u>, 2007 WL 2351072 (S.D.N.Y. 2007); <u>MacKenzie v Cunningham</u>, 2014 WL 5089395 (S.D.N.Y. 2014).

Parole is not constitutionally based, but is a creature of statute which may be imposed subject to conditions imposed by the state legislature. <u>Banks v Stanford</u>, 159 A.D.3d 134, 71 N.Y.S.3d 515 (2d Dept. 2018).

No constitutional or statutory right of petitioner is violated because a Board member involved in the immediate Board decision took part in a prior Board decision against the inmate. <u>Matter of DiChiaro v. Hammock</u>, 87 A.D.2d 957, 451 N.Y.S.2d 248 (3d Dept. 1982).

The guidelines score regulation cited by appellant was repealed in 2014.

The Board may consider a YO adjudication. <u>Cobb v Stanford</u>, 153 A.D.3d 1500, 59 N.Y.S.3d 915 (3d Dept. 2017); <u>Robinson v New York State Board of Parole</u>, 162 A.D.3d 1450, 81 N.Y.S.3d 235 (3d Dept. 2018). And, per CPL §720.35(2), the Division of Parole may use YO adjudications. Thus, the Board could properly rely on appellant's Youthful Offender ("YO") adjudication as one of the reasons for denying him release to parole supervision. <u>Matter of Pina v. Hammock</u>, 89 A.D.2d 799, 453 N.Y.S.2d 479 (4<sup>th</sup> Dept. 1982); <u>People v Vite-Acosta</u>, 184 Misc.2d 206, 708 N.Y.S.2d 585 (Sup. Ct. Bronx County 2000); <u>U.S. v Cuello</u>, 357 F.3d. 162 (2d Cir. 2004); <u>Murray v Evans</u>, 83 A.D.3d

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1320, 920 N.Y.S.2d 745 (3d Dept. 2011); <u>Amen v New York State Division of Parole</u>, 100 A.D.3d 1230, 954 N.Y.S.2d 276 (3d Dept. 2012). Per CPL 720.35(2), the Board may consider confidential information that pertains to prior YO adjudications. <u>Martin v New York State Division of Parole</u>, 47 A.D.3d 1152, 851 N.Y.S.2d 664 (3d Dept. 2008). The Board could cite the appellant's juvenile record in denying parole release. <u>Waters v New York State Division of Parole</u>, 271 A.D.2d 779, 706 N.Y.S.2d 213 (3d Dept 2000); <u>U.S. v Daniels</u>, 929 F.2d 128 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1991).

Claims revolving around a speech by former Commissioner Manley are without merit as his comments were not made under oath, and create no substantive rights. <u>Matter of Alvarez v Evans</u>, Index # 2804/2013, *Decision and Order* dated July 30, 2013 (Sup. Ct. Dutchess Co.)(Brands, J.S.C.). Furthermore, Manley has not been on the Board in over a decade, and many of his concerns have been addressed by the enactment of 9 N.Y.C.R.R. 8002.2. And, the transcript reveals the Board did discuss all required issues, and the Board decision is adequately detailed.

Denial of parole is neither arbitrary nor capricious when the Parole Board relied on the factors defined by the New York statute. <u>Hodge v Griffin</u>, 2014 WL 2453333(S.D.N.Y. 2014) citing <u>Romer v Travis</u>, 2003 WL 21744079. An arbitrary action is one without sound basis in reason and without regard to the facts. Rationality is what is reviewed under an arbitrary and capricious standard. <u>Hamilton v New York State Division of Parole</u>, 119 A.D.3d 1268, 990 N.Y.S.2d 714 (3d Dept. 2014). An action is arbitrary and capricious when it is taken without sound basis in reason or regard to the facts. <u>Ward v City of Long Beach</u>, 20 N.Y.3d 1042 (2013). Denial is neither arbitrary nor capricious when the Board relies on factors defined by New York statute. <u>Siao-Paul v. Connolly</u>, 564 F. Supp. 2d 232, 242 (S.D.N.Y. 2008); <u>Hanna v New York State Board of Parole</u>, 169 A.D.3d 503, 92 N.Y.S.3d 621 (1<sup>st</sup> Dept. 2019).

The appellant has failed to demonstrate that the Parole Board's determination was affected by a showing of irrationality bordering on impropriety. <u>Matter of Silmon v Travis</u>, 95 N.Y.2d 470, 718 N.Y.S.2d 704 (2001); <u>Matter of Russo v New York State Board of Parole</u>, 50 N.Y.2d 69, 77, 427 N.Y.S.2d 982 (1980).

In the absence of a convincing demonstration that the Board did not consider the statutory factors, it must be presumed that the Board fulfilled its duty. <u>Matter of Fuchino v. Herbert</u>, 255 A.D.2d 914, 914, 680 N.Y.S.2d 389, 390 (4th Dept. 1998); <u>Matter of McLain v. New York State Div. of Parole</u>, 204 A.D.2d 456, 611 N.Y.S.2d 629 (2d Dept. 1994); <u>Matter of McKee v. New York State Bd. of Parole</u>, 157 A.D.2d 944, 945, 550 N.Y.S.2d 204, 205 (3d Dept. 1990); <u>People ex rel.</u> Herbert, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881.

Appellant's claim that the Board failed to comply with the 2011 amendments to the Executive Law is rejected. <u>Dolan v New York State Board of Parole</u>, 122 A.D.3d 1058, 995 N.Y.S.2d 850 (3d Dept. 2014); <u>Tran v Evans</u>, 126 A.D.3d 1196, 3 N.Y.S.3d 633 (3d Dept. 2015); <u>Boccadisi v Stanford</u>, 133 A.D.3d 1169, 20 N.Y.S.3d 477 (3d Dept. 2015). Furthermore, the 2011 Executive Law amendments

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have been incorporated into the regulations adopted by the Board in 2017. These constitute the written procedures.

The 2011 amendments to the Executive Law, as well as the state regulations governing parole, do not create a legitimate expectancy of release that would give rise to a due process interest in parole. <u>Fuller v Evans</u>, 586 Fed.Appx. 825 (2d Cir. 2014) <u>cert.den</u>. 135 S.Ct. 2807, 192 L.Ed2d 851. The 2017 amended regulations don't create any substantive right to release, but rather, merely increase transparency in the final decision. Courts must defer to the Parole Board's interpretation of its own regulations so long as it is rational and not arbitrary nor capricious. <u>Brown v Stanford</u>, 163 A.D.3d 1337, 82 N.Y.S.3d 622 (3d Dept. 2018).

The Board cited a negative COMPAS score in its decision. Thus, the Board did not depart from the COMPAS.

Appellant's contention that the Board failed to comply with the 2011 Amendments to the Executive Law is likewise without merit. Although Appellant alleges the amendments represented a fundamental change in the legal regime governing parole determinations requiring a focus on forward-looking factors, this proposition is not supported by the language of the statute itself, considering the relatively modest change to Section 259-c(4) and the absence of any substantive change to Section 259-i(2), which governs the discretionary release consideration process. The Board still must conduct a case-by-case review of each inmate by considering the statutory factors, including the instant offense. Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A); <u>Matter of Montane v. Evans</u>, 116 A.D.3d 197, 202, 981 N.Y.S.2d 866, 870 (3d Dept. 2014). Thus, even where the First Department has "take[n] the unusual step of affirming the annulment of a decision of [the Board]", it has nonetheless reiterated that "[t]he Board is not obligated to refer to each factor, or to give every factor equal weight" and rejected any requirement that the Board prioritize "factors which emphasize forward thinking and planning over the other statutory factors". <u>Matter of Rossakis v.</u> New York State Bd. of Parole, 146 A.D.3d 22, 29 (1st Dept. 2016).

The Board's decision to hold an inmate for the maximum period of 24 months is within the Board's discretion and within its authority pursuant to Executive Law § 259-i(2)(a) and 9 N.Y.C.R.R. § 8002.3(b). <u>Matter of Tatta v. State of N.Y., Div. of Parole</u>, 290 A.D.2d 907, 737 N.Y.S.2d 163 (3d Dept. 2002), <u>Iv. denied</u>, 98 N.Y.2d 604, 746 N.Y.S.2d 278 (2002); <u>see also Matter of Campbell v. Evans</u>, 106 A.D.3d 1363, 965 N.Y.S.2d 672 (3d Dept. 2013). Appellant has failed to demonstrate that a hold of 24 months for discretionary release was excessive or improper. In the absence of impropriety, the reconsideration date set by the Board will not be disturbed. <u>Matter of Tatta v. State of N.Y., Div. of Parole</u>, 290 A.D.2d 907, 908, 737 N.Y.S.2d 163 (3d Dept. 2002); <u>accord Matter of Evans v. Dennison</u>, 13 Misc. 3d 1236(A), 831 N.Y.S.2d 353 (Sup. Ct. Westchester Co. 2006) (rejecting challenge to 24-month hold).

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**Recommendation:** Affirm.