



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

Birgit Fladager
District Attorney

Assistant District Attorney
David P. Harris

Chief Deputies
Marlisa Ferreira
Jeffrey M. Laugero
Wendell Emerson
Michael D. Houston
Mark Zahner

Bureau of Investigation
Chief Terry L. Seese

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: July 12, 2021
Re: Adrian Alexander Woodard
Parole Granted

For More Information Contact:

John Goold, Public Information Liaison
Phone: (209) 525-6909

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Adrian Alexander Woodard, age 50, of Modesto, has been granted parole following a March 17, 2021, hearing before the Board of Parole Hearings and a mandatory review of the grant of parole. On July 02, 2021, the Board of Parole Hearings was notified that the Governor will take no further action in this case.

On July 25, 1995, at approximately 10:00 p.m., Modesto Police Detective Bertalotto initiated a traffic detention on a suspect vehicle in which Woodard was a passenger. The suspect vehicle attempted to evade Detective Bertalotto, driving at a high rate of speed and running numerous stop signs and stop lights.

During the pursuit, Woodard stood up through the T-top of the suspect vehicle. It was then that Detective Bertalotto observed two bright orange flashes where Woodard stood, heard two gunshots and heard objects striking his patrol vehicle.

Woodard and the driver were eventually detained and both the suspect vehicle and Detective Bertalotto's patrol vehicle were examined. The patrol vehicle had sustained several small impacts which appeared to have been the result of shot pellets striking the vehicle. Two live 12-gauge cartridges were located on the rear floorboard of the suspect vehicle. A pistol grip, pump-action 12-gauge shotgun was located nearby.

Woodard was convicted by way of jury trial on April 16, 1996 of attempted murder of a peace officer. It was also found true that Woodard has personally used a firearm when he attempted to murder Detective Bertalotto. Woodard was sentenced to life in state prison with the possibility of parole and became eligible for parole in 2014 because of California's so called "youthful offender" parole eligibility. This allows criminals under age 26 to apply for early release because their brains were not "fully mature". Initially the law applied to those under age 18 then to those under 23, now it is under 26.

Office: 832 12th Street, Suite 300 Modesto, CA 95354 Mailing: PO BOX 442 Modesto, CA 95353
Telephone: (209) 525-5550 Fax: (209) 558-4027 www.stanislaus-da.org



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Woodard received an additional four-year sentence in 2000 for aggravated battery by a prisoner, but he will not serve those four years under the current state of California law.

The People argued against Woodard's release, however the Board of Parole hearings determined that Woodard no longer posed an unreasonable danger to society and was suitable for parole. Because Woodard attempted to kill a police officer, the grant of parole was subject to automatic review, however the grant was not reversed and the Governor took no further action.

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