



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

**IN THE MATTER OF
RABORN ALLAH
W58709**

TYPE OF HEARING: Revocation Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: August 27, 2013

DATE OF DECISION: March 7, 2014

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Ina Howard-Hogan, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Josh Wall

DECISION OF THE BOARD: After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, criminal record, institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in writing, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is granted to a long term residential program on or after March 21, 2014.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Raborn Allah is serving a life sentence for second degree murder. He has been released on parole twice, and each parole has ended with a violation and revocation after a relatively short time in the community. His first parole release was in August 2009. In violation of an important condition of his parole, he associated with his co-defendant and parole was revoked by the Board on April 25, 2011, at the completion of the revocation process. Allah complicated his situation during the revocation process by making some false and misleading statements to Parole staff and Board Members.

After a revocation review hearing on December 6, 2011, Allah was released on a second parole on April 13, 2012. He was returned to custody on January 30, 2013 after his estranged wife alleged to police that he committed an assault and battery on her. A criminal complaint did not issue, but Allah's wife repeated the allegations to parole staff and further alleged that

there was an earlier incident as well. She also described a pattern of extramarital activity by Allah.

Allah participated in the murder of George Greer in Springfield on March 5, 1974. Allah pleaded guilty to second-degree murder as a joint venturer. He was armed with a gun at the scene, but did not interact with the victim, pursue the victim, or fire his weapon. Allah's co-defendant pursued Mr. Greer and shot him multiple times.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON AUGUST 27, 2013

Raborn Allah has been revoked twice after receiving paroles on the life sentence he is serving for the second degree murder of George Greer. Both times Allah was on parole for only a short time before committing the violations that resulted in revocation. Allah was released on the second parole on April 13, 2012 to live with a female friend in Arlington. He was not involved in a relationship with the home sponsor. He attended AA meetings and obtained employment in May 2012. By August, he was engaged to a new girlfriend and they married in October. In late January 2013, they separated and Allah moved out of the family apartment in Lynn where he had been living with his spouse and her children. On January 30, the spouse alleged to Lynn police that Allah scratched her face during an argument. She said the argument involved Allah's "cheating on her."

Lynn police filed for a criminal complaint. After a hearing on February 20, 2013, the court clerk did not issue a complaint and recorded that the spouse "recanted the story and stated that she attacked him." The clerk found there was not probable cause to support the allegation. After the court date, however, the spouse repeated the allegations in a conversation with parole staff in March. She also referred to an earlier incident and described Allah's extramarital activity that included inappropriate conduct. The spouse provided no specifics about the earlier incident and did not mention it when she made her report to police. In light of all the facts and circumstances, the Parole Board concluded that the earlier incident did not involve a physical assault by Allah.

At this hearing, Allah offered his opinions that, "I am guilty of not heeding the advice of those closest to me, including not notifying my parole officer of the issues I was having with my wife. However, I am not guilty of physically putting my hands on her or verbally abusing her. I tried to introduce her to Islam." Allah described the issues that contributed to the discord and emphasized that his wife showed considerable jealousy whenever he had incidental or trivial contact with another woman. He admitted that he did not heed the advice and warnings of his parole officer. He said that he and his wife continued contact for three months after his return to custody, but that he stopped the contact sometime in April 2013.

The hearing clarified two points. First, Allah was not the aggressor in the altercation, and whatever physical contact he made with his spouse was brief, self-protective or reactive, and did not constitute an assault and battery. Second, Allah was not conducting himself appropriately on matters related to relationships. He pursues relationships and contacts with women in a manner that is excessive, irresponsible, and incompatible with a productive and compliant parole performance. He uses poor judgment and creates situations for himself that have a predictably poor outcome. This behavior undermines his achievements on parole, appears to conflict with some of his religious beliefs, and distances him from his supporters.

This parole violation is a clear example of the risks associated with his poor judgment and irresponsible behavior.

Allah's mother and three members of his mosque spoke in support of parole. Hampden Assistant District Attorney Deborah Ahlstrom spoke in opposition to re-parole.

III. DECISION

Raborn Allah was substantially successful on his re-parole as he attended AA meetings and maintained sobriety, worked at a job where his supervisor valued his performance, and stayed involved with his religious community. Unfortunately, Allah's aggressive and irresponsible pursuit of relationships with different women undermined his achievements as he ended up in a physical altercation with an estranged spouse. Based on all the evidence related to the incident, the Parole Board concludes that Allah was not an aggressor or even a mutual combatant. His actions over time, however, contributed significantly to the dispute and his judgment was clouded by his need for relationships with women. Allah does not present a risk for violence and his period or re-incarceration is sufficient accountability for his actions. The accountability should assist Allah in improving his judgment and reforming the personal conduct that interfered with his ability to avoid heated arguments and physical confrontations. It should now be clear to Allah that he is unlikely to succeed on parole or in his personal relationships if he does not address some of his own thinking and behavior.

The standard we apply in assessing candidates for parole is set out in 120 C.M.R. 300.04, which provides that, "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such offender is released, the offender will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." Applying that appropriately high standard here, the Board finds that Mr. Allah is a suitable candidate for parole because Mr. Allah is rehabilitated, he does not present a risk for violence, and this period of revocation is sufficient to address the negative behavior that resulted in parole violation.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Parole to a long term residential program on or after March 21, 2014; no drug use; no alcohol use; AA or NA three times per week with a sponsor; counseling for dependency on women; no contact with former spouse.

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.



Josh Wall, Chairman



Date