



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

12 Mercer Road
Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn Polito
Lieutenant Governor

Daniel Bennett
Secretary

Telephone # (508) 650-4500
Facsimile # (508) 650-4599

Paul Treseler
Chairperson

Michael J. Callahan
Executive Director

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

STEPHEN EMMONS

W60522

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: November 3, 2015

DATE OF DECISION: January 19, 2016

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Paul M. Treseler, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sheila Dupre, Tonomey Coleman, Ina Howard-Hogan, Tina Hurley, Lucy Soto-Abbe.

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 written submissions to the Board, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review scheduled in five years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On April 29, 1996, in Suffolk Superior Court, Stephen Emmons pled guilty to the second degree murder of Nancy Wilson. Subsequently he was sentenced to life in prison, with the possibility of parole. Mr. Emmons is currently 56 years old.

On April 21, 1995 authorities discovered the body of Ms. Wilson inside of a car that was parked in a residential garage in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston. Officers responded to the home after receiving information that Mr. Emmons had confessed his involvement in Ms. Wilson's murder to his 6 year old daughter and expressed his intent to kill himself. The investigation determined that Ms. Wilson had been beaten to death approximately one week prior to the discovery of her body. Ms. Wilson's injuries included severe head trauma, approximately 25 broken ribs, and bite marks to her upper arms.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON NOVEMBER 3, 2015

Mr. Emmons came before the Parole Board on November 3, 2015 for a review hearing. This was his second appearance before the Board. Mr. Emmons' initial hearing took place on March 9, 2010 and resulted in parole being denied. Mr. Emmons was represented by Student Attorneys Sayra Gordilla and Helen Martinez during his appearance before the Board.

Mr. Emmons gave an opening statement to the Board, in which he apologized for his actions. During the course of the hearing, he spoke about the murder. According to Mr. Emmons he was in the garage with Ms. Wilson, where her body was later discovered, when they began to argue about personal items Mr. Emmons' had left at the home of Ms. Wilson's sister. Mr. Emmons told the Board he became so angry at Ms. Wilson that he lost control of himself and started to hit her. Ms. Wilson attempted to exit the car they were sitting in, but Mr. Emmons continued to strike her. Ms. Wilson hit her head on the wall and fell to the ground. Mr. Emmons then started to stomp on Ms. Wilson's chest with his foot until she stopped moving. After attempting to resuscitate her to no avail, Mr. Emmons placed Ms. Wilson inside the car and put a blanket over her.

Mr. Emmons admitted that during his previous appearance before the Board, he testified to a different version of these facts. Mr. Emmons explained that during his prior appearance he did not admit to stomping on Ms. Wilson's chest. He further claimed that Ms. Wilson's broken ribs were caused by his attempts to resuscitate her. Mr. Emmons explained to the Board that guilt, embarrassment and shame caused him to carry the truth about Ms. Wilson's murder with him for approximately 20 years.

When questioned by the Board, Mr. Emmons addressed his behavior prior to and during his incarceration. Mr. Emmons cited the effects of substance abuse and his issues with anger management as some of the major factors contributing to his criminal behavior and the murder of Ms. Wilson. According to Mr. Emmons, he verbally and physically abused Ms. Wilson during their relationship. The Board also acknowledges Mr. Emmons's poor institutional adjustment, including multiple disciplinary reports since his last appearance before the Board. Additionally, Mr. Emmons has a history of violence, including armed robbery.

Mr. Emmons discussed his prior experiences on parole with the Board. Mr. Emmons received parole on two occasions prior to this conviction, both of which were revoked. During his first release, Mr. Emmons was arrested for an unarmed robbery within approximately one month of his release. During his second release, Mr. Emmons violated his parole after approximately 18 months by causing his whereabouts to be unknown.

In addition to Mr. Emmons, the Board also received live testimony from numerous witnesses, both in support of and in opposition to Mr. Emmons' petition for parole.

III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Emmons has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. The Board believes a longer period of positive institutional adjustment and programming would be beneficial to Mr. Emmons' rehabilitation.

The applicable standard used by the Board to assess a candidate for parole is: "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." 120 C.M.R. 300.04. In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration

Mr. Emmons' institutional behavior as well as his participation in available work, educational and treatment programs during the period of his incarceration. The Board has also considered whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Emmons' risk of recidivism.

After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Emmons' case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Mr. Emmons is not yet rehabilitated and therefore does not merit parole at this time. Mr. Emmons' next appearance before the Board will take place in five years from the date of the review hearing related to this decision. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Emmons to continue working towards his full rehabilitation by committing to programming that will address his anger management and substance abuse issues.

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.



Michael Callahan, Executive Director



Date