



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety



PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

JAMES GRAHAM

W51628

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: January 4, 2011

DATE OF DECISION: August 25, 2011

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Cesar Archilla, John Bocon, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Ina Howard-Hogan, Roger Michel, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Josh Wall

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Denied with a review in 5 years. The decision is unanimous.

James Graham committed two separate and unrelated murders. He is serving two concurrent life sentences for second degree murder. He has completed a concurrent sentence of 18-20 years for an armed robbery connected to one of the murders. Mr. Graham's initial parole hearing in 2006 resulted in a denial with a review in five years.

On June 13, 1988, Mr. Graham shot Giovanni McLemore, age 19, once in the head and killed him on Devon Street in the Grove Hall section of Boston. The two men were acquaintances who had a recent disagreement. The victim had purchased a ring from Mr. Graham; after the purchase, the victim learned that Mr. Graham had taken the ring from his girlfriend in order to sell it; the victim returned the ring to Mr. Graham's girlfriend, and the girlfriend, upon learning of Mr. Graham's actions, broke up with Mr. Graham. Mr. Graham sought revenge. He waited for the victim to leave a Devon Street residence, and attacked him at 2:45 a.m. An elderly neighbor heard Mr. Graham hitting the victim, heard the victim saying "Please don't kill me," heard Mr. Graham saying "you have to show me respect," and then heard the gunshot. Mr. Graham fled to Pennsylvania and then California.

Mr. Graham had returned to Boston by 1990, and resumed selling drugs. On February 14, 1991, Mr. Graham had a dispute over money and drugs with Charles Holmes; Mr. Graham believed that Mr. Holmes owed him money from a previous delivery of crack cocaine. Mr. Graham tried to shoot Mr. Holmes; the gun jammed without firing. Mr. Graham then attacked the victim by beating and stabbing him. Mr. Graham stabbed the victim numerous times, and took money from the victim's pocket as he was dying.

Mr. Graham's institutional conduct has been primarily positive with only two disciplinary reports and participation in several programs.

Mr. Graham murdered two people in separate incidents. Mr. Graham acted out of uncontrollable anger and with extraordinary violence. Mr. Graham needs continued work on his considerable anger issues and substance abuse issues. He needs a longer period of programming and positive conduct to achieve rehabilitation and alleviate concerns that his release would jeopardize public safety. He has been incarcerated 20 years for two murders. His release is not, at this time, compatible with the welfare of society because the length of incarceration is not sufficient to achieve rehabilitation, deterrence, punishment, or public safety.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing.

Josh Wall

Josh Wall, Chairman

August 25, 2011

Date