



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

GEORGE STALLINGS

W68184

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: September 17, 2013

DATE OF DECISION: November 1, 2013

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, 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, institutional record, the testimony of the inmate, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the board, we conclude by a unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole at this time. Parole is denied with a review in five years.

I.STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On September 11, 1998, the body of Rufus Thomas (age 35) was found by Boston Police officers in his apartment in Dorchester. Mr. Thomas' body was found next to his bed beneath a pile of clothing with his hands and feet bound with an electric cord. Mr. Thomas had been asphyxiated. A large kitchen knife was found on the bed. Several items of Mr. Thomas' jewelry, including three rings normally worn by him and his credit cards could not be found in the apartment.

On September 23, 1998, George Stallings was arrested driving Mr. Thomas' missing motor vehicle in Manchester, New Hampshire. Mr. Stallings had keys to the car as well as the missing keys to Mr. Thomas' apartment. On the morning of September 8th, Mr. Stallings had cashed a check from Mr. Thomas' account in Boston and did the same again on September 9th in Manchester. While in Manchester, Mr. Stallings confided to a friend to strangling a man in Boston and leaving him beneath a pile of clothes. Mr. Stallings could also be placed at the

crime scene by fingerprints in the apartment and a DNA match to a bloodstain on the victim's bed.

On June 6, 2000, George Stallings plead guilty to second degree murder in Suffolk Superior Court.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2013

George Stallings is incarcerated on a specialized unit for individuals who require treatment for mental illness. He has been transferred between Bridgewater State Hospital and various levels of security due to both behavioral issues and mental health issues, including multiple suicide attempts. Mr. Stallings has accrued approximately 30 disciplinary issues throughout his incarceration, many of which include physical altercations. Mr. Stallings lost his right eye when engaged in a physical altercation with another inmate in 2005. The Parole Board focused most questions on Mr. Stallings history of mental health and disciplinary issues and his overall level of rehabilitation.

In discussing his version of the offense, Mr. Stallings said he agreed to participate with another individual in the robbery of Rufus Thomas. He stated he spent an extraordinary length of time in the apartment while his friend was in the bedroom with Mr. Thomas. He insisted that the original plan did not include violence, but admitted that once he began to confront Mr. Thomas for his money, he began to beat him when he did not receive the response he wanted. Mr. Stallings does not dispute the facts of the case; however, he stated that he does not recall all that he did to Mr. Thomas, as he believes he was in a type of anger black-out. Mr. Stallings reported that he is still shocked at the level of violence he inflicted on Mr. Thomas, and expressed his remorse for having done so.

Mr. Stallings admitted that his overall institutional adjustment is poor. He attributes his disciplinary issues to his being labeled as a "snitch" by other inmates. Mr. Stallings stated that he has testified in a case involving an assault on another inmate, and he has assisted other inmates who have been victimized. He said that he is motivated to do the right thing despite negative consequences in the institution. As a result of his efforts to assist others, Mr. Stallings stated that he has become a target for many inmates. The Parole Board addressed many disciplinary reports that did not show Mr. Stallings as a victim of retaliation but rather as a person who was aggressive or breaking rules. Many of Mr. Stallings disciplinary reports describe his behavior as being confrontational, abusive, and aggressive. His most recent acts of violence were three fights in 2011, including one aggravated assault on an inmate. Mr. Stallings offered his explanations for several of the disciplinary reports.

In terms of Mr. Stallings mental health issues, he acknowledges trying to commit suicide while incarcerated, most recently via an attempt to hang himself in 2005. Mr. Stallings required medical attention and was hospitalized at Bridgewater State Hospital following his medical clearance. According to Bridgewater State Hospital records, Mr. Stallings has described auditory hallucinations in the past. Mr. Stallings reported to the Parole Board that his most recent experience of hearing voices was on the way over in the van. He described his voices as being derogatory and negative regarding his Parole Hearing. Mr. Stallings denied any auditory hallucinations during the hearing.

After careful review of his mental health records, the Parole Board asked Mr. Stallings questions regarding a history of conflicting diagnosis due to his self-reports, behavior, and response to treatment. Mr. Stallings considers himself to be a person who suffers from periods of psychosis and stated he is in need of treatment, primarily via medications. As long as he complies with such treatment, Mr. Stallings considers himself to be stable and productive. According to his most recent evaluation at Bridgewater State Hospital, Mr. Stallings diagnosis is more indicative of antisocial personality disorder, and not a major mood disorder or psychotic disorder. In addition, there were continued concerns conveyed by the evaluator that Mr. Stallings did present with many risk factors that make him a management issue, and that the risk factors were not related to any mental illness. Mr. Stallings disagrees with any opinion that disputes his experiences of auditory hallucinations and other symptoms contributing to what he believes to be a mood disorder with psychotic features. He does, however, also insist that he is stable now that he is receiving appropriate care.

Mr. Stallings is an open mental health case and receives medication and other forms of treatment. Mr. Stallings stated that his participation in the specialized treatment unit for those suffering with mental illness has been very helpful. Mr. Stallings stated that once he is released from the prison environment, where he no longer has to deal with those trying to retaliate against him, he will be able to live a non-violent and productive life.

Mr. Stallings did not have anyone in attendance to support his parole release. He stated that he is married and that his wife who currently resides in Florida would be willing to move back to Massachusetts to assist him with re-integrating into the community.

Suffolk Assistant District Attorney Charles Bartoloni appeared in opposition and emphasized Mr. Stallings' poor institutional adjustment, lack of rehabilitation and unrealistic parole plan as primary reasons to justify a denial for his parole release.

III. DECISION

George Stallings presented as thoughtful and respectful during his parole hearing. Mr. Stallings does appear to be engaged in positive rehabilitation at this point, but he has amassed a record of violent and abusive disciplinary reports requiring incarceration in special management units. He has also had several suicide attempts and other mental health complaints requiring multiple hospitalizations at Bridgewater State Hospital. Therefore due to both behavior and mental health issues, Mr. Stallings has not had long periods of stabilization where he is able to engage in his rehabilitation without incident. Mr. Stallings insists that his poor adjustment is due to his being labeled as an informant; however, his record includes many incidents of violence or poor behavior unrelated to his cooperation with authorities.

Mr. Stallings requires specialized mental health supports at this time in order to be safe, as well as for the safety of others. He is commended for progressing in his treatment and for his lack of disciplinary reports in the past year. Mr. Stallings, however, needs a longer period of positive adjustment, as well as a comprehensive parole plan that would address all of his needs if he were to be considered for parole.

The standard 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 an 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, the Parole Board concludes that Mr. Stallings is not currently suitable for parole. It is the unanimous decision of the Parole Board to deny Mr. Stallings' parole with a review in five years. Mr. Stallings is encouraged to continue his positive participation in mental health treatment and take advantage of other opportunities for rehabilitation.

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.


Caitlin E. Casey, Chief of Staff


Date