*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*
*Executive Office of Public Safety*
**PAROLE BOARD**
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**Deval L. Patrick**
*Governor*

**Andrea J. Cabral**
*Secretary*

**Josh Wall**
*Chairman*

**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**DONALD GHEE**

**W49205**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** **Review Hearing**

**DATE OF HEARING:** **June 3, 2014**

**DATE OF DECISION:** **September 19, 2014**

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sheila Dupre, Ina Howard Hogan, Tina Hurley, 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 views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the Board, and the inmate's statements at the hearing, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review hearing in five years from the date of the hearing.

## I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On July 4, 1989, Donald Ghee (age 48) was arrested in Connecticut for driving while intoxicated and a search of the vehicle revealed the decomposing body of his girlfriend, Karen Jackson (age 24), who had been shot to death a few days earlier in Boston.

On October 15, 1990, in Suffolk Superior Court, Ghee was convicted by a jury of first degree murder and possession of a firearm (sawed off shotgun). The trial judge, exercising his discretion under Mass. R. Crim. P. 25 (b) (2), reduced the verdict to second degree murder and sentenced Ghee to life in prison with the possibility of parole. Ghee also received a sentence on the firearm charge of 18 to 20 years to be served from and after the life sentence.

Shortly before seven o'clock on the morning of July 4, 1989, a Connecticut State Trooper was on duty on Interstate Route 95 in East Lyme. He saw a motor vehicle partly on the median strip and Ghee apparently trying to restart it and push it off the median strip. The

Trooper approached Ghee. The Trooper determined that Ghee, alone in the vehicle, was under the influence of alcohol and arrested him. The Trooper then called for a tow truck, and Louis Morgillo, an employee of Niantic River Transmission Company, towed the vehicle to his employer's garage. There, Morgillo noticed an odor, apparently coming from the vehicle's trunk that another State Trooper had mentioned to him when they were near the vehicle on Route 95. Morgillo opened the trunk, thought that he saw a body, and immediately slammed the trunk shut. He called the police. An East Lyme police officer arrived, opened the trunk briefly, saw the body of a black female, closed the trunk, and then called the State Police. Two State Police officers arrived, looked in the trunk, and took Polaroid pictures of the body in the trunk.

The body was that of Karen Jackson, Ghee's girlfriend of about eight months. In a coordinated effort, a search warrant was obtained for Ghee's house at 24 Williams Street Roxbury, Massachusetts. The search of the house revealed a 16 gauge sawed-off shotgun, a pinky fingerprint of Ghee's on the sawed-off shotgun, a "spent" 16 gauge shell from the sawed-off shotgun, and garbage bags that matched the same "run numbers" on the bag in which Ms. Jackson's body was found. Additionally, there was blood on the first floor and on various items on the third floor. There was no evidence of a struggle but there was evidence that suggested that the gun was fired from about six or seven feet from the victim. Further evidence showed that the shot shells contained twelve #1 buck pellets, the same as the twelve #1 buck pellets removed from Ms. Jackson's body at the autopsy. Ghee was subsequently charged with the murder and the possession of the sawed-off shotgun.

## II. PAROLE HEARING ON JUNE 3, 2014

Donald Ghee, age 73, appeared for his third parole hearing on the life sentence he is serving. He seeks parole to a from and after sentence of 18 to 20 years. The Board denied Ghee in 2004 and in 2009 citing his history of violent behavior, lack of any acceptance of his criminal history, and failure to invest in rehabilitation.

Ghee was present for his parole hearing. At the outset of the hearing, he requested to waive his hearing, stating that he has come to the conclusion that due to his age and his on and after sentence structure, he would never realistically be free. The Chairman asked Ghee a series of questions to assess his level of understanding about his options and whether he had the capacity to appreciate that the Board would not hold a hearing for five years based on his request. Ghee affirmed his decision and his reasons for requesting to waive his parole.

## III. DECISION

Donald Ghee was present for his parole hearing. At the outset of the hearing, Ghee informed the Board that he was requesting to waive his right to a hearing. Ghee stated that he had come to accept that due to his sentence structure, which includes a from and after sentence of 18 to 20 years, he would not have the opportunity to be free because of his age. Based on Ghee's request to waive his hearing, he was informed that the Board would deny his parole and he would receive a review hearing in five years. Ghee presented as mentally competent and well informed about his options and his decision. Parole is denied with a review in five years.

*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.*

Janis DiLoreto Smith, General Counsel

9/19/14
Date