



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

AARON WATTS

W49607

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** September 5, 2019

**DATE OF DECISION:** March 26, 2020

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Gloriann Moroney, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Karen McCarthy, Colette Santa

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On December 17, 1990, in Suffolk Superior Court, Mr. Watts pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of 26-year-old James Moody and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On the same date, he was also convicted of unlawfully carrying a shotgun for which he received a 3 to 5 year concurrent sentence.

Mr. Watts, now 51-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on September 5, 2019. He was not represented by counsel. This was Mr. Watts' fifth appearance before the Board, having been denied parole in 2004, 2007, 2012 and 2017. The entire video recording of Mr. Watts' September 5, 2019 hearing is fully incorporated by reference to the Board's decision.

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of 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 decision that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole. Reserve to sober home but not before 18 months in lower security. After a gradual transition, release meets the legal standard. Mr. Watts has availed himself of treatment and programming to address his causative factors. Additionally, he has maintained a positive adjustment.

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. Watts' 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 a risk and needs assessment and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Watts' risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Mr. Watts' case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Mr. Watts is rehabilitated and merits parole at this time.

**Special Conditions:** Reserve to sober home for a minimum of 6 months after 18 months in lower security; Waive work for 2 weeks; Must be at home between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. at PO discretion; ELMO-electronic monitoring at PO discretion; Supervise for drugs; testing in accordance with agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence; testing in accordance with agency policy; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; No contact with victim's family; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment/transition; Must attend AA/NA at least 3 times per week.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The above decision is an abbreviated administrative decision issued in an effort to render an expedited resolution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Watts, through counsel, has waived his right to a full administrative decision.

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

  
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Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date