



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*



PAROLE BOARD

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Executive Director

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

ANTOINE PRICE

W99319

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: September 23, 2021

DATE OF DECISION: September 14, 2022

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

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 vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review scheduled in two years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE¹

On September 26, 2011, after a jury trial in Worcester Superior Court, Antoine Price was convicted of second-degree murder in the shooting death of 18-year-old Eric Hayes and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, Mr. Price received a 5 to 7 year concurrent sentence for assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, a 4 to 5 year concurrent sentence for possession of a firearm, and a 2 year concurrent sentence for possession of ammunition.

Eric Hayes and Catelynn Rodwill (the co-defendant of Antoine Price) had been in a romantic relationship prior to the murder. Ms. Rodwill had become pregnant, causing issues in the relationship. She later miscarried. Thereafter, beginning in October 2006, Ms. Rodwill

¹ Derived in part from *Commonwealth v. Price*, 90 Mass. App. Ct. 1104 (2016).

began dating Mr. Price. On the afternoon of November 20, 2006, Ms. Rodwill, Mr. Price, and Mr. Hayes were "hanging out" in Ms. Rodwill's third-floor apartment in Worcester. Mr. Price and Mr. Hayes had an argument that escalated, lasting about five minutes. Mr. Price left the apartment, but he was subsequently picked up by Ms. Rodwill. As they drove back to the apartment, Mr. Price (who had consumed alcohol much of the day) said, "[Mr. Hayes is] still going to get it."

When they returned at around 8:00 p.m. and parked the car, Mr. Price asked Ms. Rodwill to "pop the trunk." Mr. Hayes then appeared from behind some bushes, and an argument ensued between Mr. Price and Mr. Hayes. Mr. Price grabbed a gun from a bag inside the trunk. When Mr. Hayes asked, "What? Are you going to shoot me," Mr. Price fired the gun, shooting him near his waist. Multiple witnesses then saw Mr. Price repeatedly punch, kick, and "stomp" on Mr. Hayes. Ms. Rodwill also struck Mr. Hayes, while he was on the ground. Witnesses heard Mr. Hayes say, "I'm dying" and "He shot me" and "Tell my mom I love her." Mr. Hayes subsequently died of a gunshot wound to the torso, which caused perforation to his bladder and major blood vessels. Mr. Price and Ms. Rodwill fled the scene. They were subsequently arrested at the apartment of Mr. Price's mother.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 23, 2021²

Antoine Price, now 38-years-old, appeared before the Board for his initial hearing on September 23, 2021. He was represented by student attorneys from Boston College Law School. Mr. Price detailed a difficult childhood during which he abused alcohol. After being shot in a 2003 robbery, Mr. Price explained that he then carried a gun (which was later used in the governing offense). Mr. Price cited anger from his childhood, as well as his alcohol use, as the reasons for killing Mr. Hayes. Board Members, however, struggled with his motive for committing the murder and questioned Mr. Price as to whether he was jealous of Mr. Hayes' romantic history with Ms. Rodwill. After the Board pressed him as to his level of understanding, Mr. Price stated that he felt "shame" for what he had done and apologized to the Hayes family.

The Board described Mr. Price's commitment to programming as "exceptional." He has completed all stages of Alternatives to Violence and was promoted to head facilitator of the program. Additionally, he has been involved in Toastmasters, Restorative Justice, Criminal Thinking, and courses that led him to earn his GED. Mr. Price is currently involved in CRA, while also working to develop a program that exposes inmates to a variety of trades. Mr. Price began attending AA following his only sanctioned disciplinary report in 2013, where he was charged with making homebrew. Mr. Price told the Board that he has a history of heavy alcohol use, although he maintained that he does not use other drugs. Mr. Price reported that meditation, self-help books, and breathing techniques are effective at managing his anger and anxiety.

Mr. Price hopes to be paroled to a sober living facility or transferred to a minimum-security institution to aid in his reentry. He expressed interest in getting his license to be a barber or to pursue culinary training. The Board noted his significant family support.

² The entire video recording of Mr. Price's September 23, 2021 hearing is fully incorporated by reference to the Board's decision.

The Board considered the testimony of five of Mr. Price's family members in support of parole. A representative from the Victim Services Unit read into the record a letter in opposition to parole from the mother of Mr. Hayes. The Board also considered testimony and a letter in opposition to parole from the Worcester County District Attorney's Office.

III. DECISION

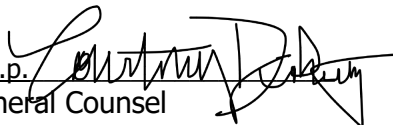
The Board is of the opinion that Antoine Price has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Price was 22-years-old when he shot and killed 18-year-old Eric Hayes. His insight into the causative factors of the crime remains unclear. He has had a positive adjustment since 2013, and immediately began engaging in significant rehabilitative programming since the beginning of his incarceration to include educational and other meaningful programs to enhance his self-development. Although progress has been made, the Board encourages him to pursue his ambitions to develop a trade such as barbering, as well as continue rehabilitative programming to address his underlying causative factors.

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. Price's 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. Price's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Price's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Antoine Price is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Price's next appearance before the Board will take place in two years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Price to continue working toward his full 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.

/s/ Pamela Murphy p.p.
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel



9/14/22
Date