

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

BONRAD SOK

W94398

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: August 11, 2022

DATE OF DECISION: December 5, 2022

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS¹: Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, James Kelcourse, Colette Santa

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On May 12, 2009, after a jury trial in Essex Superior Court, Mr. Sok was found guilty of second-degree murder in the shooting death of 18-year-old Christian Martinez and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. Mr. Sok was 17 years old at the time of the offense.

Mr. Sok appeared for an initial parole review hearing on August 11, 2022. He was represented by Attorney Brian Murphy. The entire video recording of Mr. Sok's August 11, 2022, 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 vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole.

Reserve to Interstate Compact – Ohio. On October 31, 2007, 17-year-old Mr. Sok participated, along with his codefendants, in the shooting death of 18-year-old Christian Martinez. The Board notes that Mr. Sok was a juvenile at the time of the offense and was evaluated by a forensic

¹ Former Chair Gloriann Moroney was no longer a board member at the time of the vote.

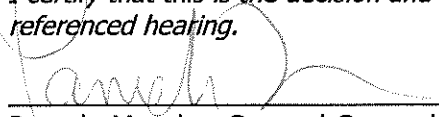
psychologist. At the age of four, Mr. Sok sustained a head injury. He was exposed to substance abuse and domestic violence as a child. He suffered physical abuse at the hand of a family member. He joined a gang at the age of fourteen and this involvement led him to the governing offense. He accepts full responsibility for his role in Mr. Martinez's murder. Mr. Sok has had excellent institutional adjustment which allows him to be in minimum security, where he has been since April 2021. He has invested in his rehabilitation and completed programming to include Restorative Justice, Jericho Circle, and Alternatives to Violence. He obtained his GED and welding certificate and trains dogs as part of the NEADS program. His renunciation was accepted by DOC and he has significant family support.

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 the context of an offender convicted of first or second-degree murder, who was a juvenile at the time the offense was committed, the Board takes into consideration the attributes of youth that distinguish juvenile homicide offenders from similarly situated adult offenders. Consideration of these factors ensures that the parole candidate, who was a juvenile at the time they committed murder, has "a real chance to demonstrate maturity and rehabilitation." *Diatchenko v. District Attorney for the Suffolk District*, 471 Mass. 12, 30 (2015); See also *Commonwealth v. Okoro*, 471 Mass. 51 (2015).

The factors considered by the Board in Mr. Sok's case include the offender's "lack of maturity and an underdeveloped sense of responsibility, leading to recklessness, impulsivity, and heedless risk-taking; vulnerability to negative influences and outside pressures, including from their family and peers; limited control over their own environment; lack of the ability to extricate themselves from horrific, crime-producing settings; and unique capacity to change as they grow older." *Id.* The Board also recognizes the petitioner's right to be represented by counsel during his appearance before the Board. *Id.* at 20-24. In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Mr. Sok'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. Sok's risk of recidivism. Applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Sok's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Bonrad Sok is rehabilitated and, therefore, merits parole at this time.

Special Conditions: Reserve to Interstate Compact – Ohio and approved home plan; Waive work for two weeks; Curfew – Must be at home between 10pm and 6 am; ELMO-electronic monitoring; 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; Counseling for adjustment/transition.

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


Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

12/5/22
Date