

Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Terrence M. Reidy
Secretary

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

12 Mercer Road
Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Telephone: (508)-650-4500

Facsimile: (508)-650-4599



Tina M. Hurley
Chair

Lian Hogan
Executive Director

RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CARL RUTH
W87777

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: July 9, 2024

DATE OF DECISION: October 10, 2024

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman,¹ Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in 2 years from the date of the hearing.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On June 6, 2006, in Worcester Superior Court, Carl Ruth pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree for the death of his wife Janice Giovanelli Ruth. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.² Parole was denied following an initial hearing in 2020. On July 9, 2024, Carl Ruth appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was not represented by counsel. Worcester County Assistant District Attorney Jesse-Paul Crane testified in opposition to parole. Two members of Janice Ruth's family (both also related to Mr. Ruth) testified in opposition to parole. In addition to the testimony received at the hearing, the Board received and considered written material including, but not limited to, records received from the Department of Correction related to incarceration history, records related to the underlying conviction, records related to Mr. Ruth's previous convictions and past parole, and Mr. Ruth's submissions to the Board during the review process.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On April 28, 2005, 39-year-old Carl Ruth and his 48-year-old wife Janice Giovanelli Ruth had a heated argument over his heavy crack cocaine use. After his wife went to bed, Mr. Ruth tried to kill her by pummeling her skull with a hammer. When he was unsuccessful in killing her with the hammer, Mr. Ruth grabbed a large knife and stabbed his

¹ Board Member Coleman was not present for the hearing, but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the file prior to vote.

² Mr. Ruth committed this crime while on parole for another matter.

wife in the neck. He covered Mrs. Ruth's head with a pillow and searched the home for money. He collected what money he could find and purchased more drugs that night. Mr. Ruth eventually confessed to a friend that he had murdered his wife. On May 5, 2005, police discovered Mrs. Ruth's body on a blood-soaked mattress with a butcher knife close by. Mr. Ruth was subsequently arrested and confessed to the murder. Mrs. Ruth's autopsy report revealed that she had approximately eight hammer wounds to her skull and two knife wounds to the back of her head. The autopsy report did not find any defensive wounds on her hands, indicating that Mrs. Ruth was asleep when Mr. Ruth attacked her.

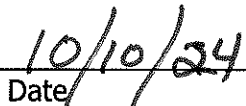
In 1991, Mr. Ruth was sentenced to a 10 to 20-year term out of Bristol Superior Court for assault with the intent to kill a person over the age of 65. In that case, Mr. Ruth used an iron pipe to rob and beat an elderly store owner for the purpose of obtaining money for drugs. He was paroled in October 1997, but his parole was revoked in June 1998. Mr. Ruth completed his sentence in 2001. In April 2004, Mr. Ruth was committed to the Worcester County House of Corrections for several crimes, including breaking and entering and larceny. In November 2004, he was released on parole. Five months later, Mr. Ruth murdered his wife.

APPLICABLE STANDARD: Parole "[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. In making this determination, the Board takes into consideration an inmate's institutional behavior, their participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of incarceration, and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize the inmate's risk of recidivism. M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. The Board also considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing and/or in written submissions to the Board (if applicable).

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Ruth committed the instant offense for which he is before the Board while he was on parole. He has been incarcerated on this offense since 2005. He has a history of violence and has twice before violated his parole. The Board acknowledges Mr. Ruth's participation in Violence Reduction, CRA, and Alternatives to Violence. Mr. Ruth reports being sober for 19 years. He has engaged in Restorative Justice. He has been employed for 9 years as a welder. Mr. Ruth presented as more forthcoming regarding his criminal history, and the Board recognizes his increased insight and accountability. However, the Board recommends he continue to engage in programming focusing on victim empathy and restorative practices. The Board also recommends Mr. Ruth develop a strong relapse prevention plan. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Carl Ruth has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

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.


Tina M. Hurley, Chair


Date