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Charlene Bonner
Chairperson

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CARL THOMPSON

W51174

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: June 16, 2015

DATE OF DECISION: August 5, 2015

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Lee Gartenberg, Ina Howard-Hogan, Tina Hurley, Lucy-Soto-Abbe.

DECISION OF THE BOARD: After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying 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 in 5 years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On September 19, 1991, in Bristol Superior Court, Carl Thompson pleaded guilty to the second degree murder of his girlfriend, Christine Roque. Thompson was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole, after serving 15 years of his life sentence. The related firearms violations were filed.

Carl Thompson met Christine Roque in 1987, while doing plumbing work at the VA hospital where she worked. They had been dating for over a year, prior to the date of the offense. On the day of the murder, Thompson was 46-years-old and the Ms. Roque was 54-years-old. During the several months prior to Ms. Roque's death, Thompson had begun to suspect that she was cheating on him with a tenant who lived upstairs in her apartment building. Thompson and Ms. Roque had several discussions about his suspicions, but she repeatedly denied any infidelity.

During the course of their relationship, they had spent several weekends at the Town and Country Motel in Raynham. In late July 1989, they planned one of their weekends away at the motel. On the evening of July 29, 1989, they arrived at the motel, and (unbeknownst to Ms. Roque) Thompson had decided to pack along his .22 caliber "Saturday Night Special" handgun. Thompson stated that he had purchased the gun off the street in 1973 because crime had been on the rise in the area and he felt a need to arm himself at the time. He had no license for it, and he was aware that the gun had no serial number.

Several hours after they had checked in to the motel, they began to argue over Thompson's belief that Ms. Roque had been unfaithful. The argument escalated and Thompson grabbed his pistol and shot Ms. Roque twice, once in the chest and once in the head. While she lay dying in the motel room, Ms. Roque asked to talk to her sister. Thompson placed the call for her. After some time in the motel room, Thompson called the police. While waiting for the police to arrive, Thompson turned the gun on himself and shot himself in the chest. When the police arrived, he told them that he had shot his girlfriend in their motel room. Thompson was transported to a hospital, where he subsequently recovered from his injury. Ms. Roque was pronounced dead at the scene.

II. CRIMINAL AND PAROLE HISTORY

Thompson has no criminal history prior to the murder and related firearms charges. The June 16, 2015 hearing is Thompson's third appearance before the Board. The Board denied parole at his initial hearing on June 1, 2004, noting that he had neither completed any programs to address the causative factors of his offense, nor demonstrated any remorse. He was given a review in three years. On June 12, 2007, Thompson appeared before the Board for his second hearing. The Board concluded once more that he had done little to prepare himself for community supervision and that he had still not completed any meaningful rehabilitation programs that addressed his causative factors. The Board suggested that Thompson enroll in the Correctional Recovery Academy program and stated that, until Thompson begins to invest in rehabilitation programs, he will remain a risk to public safety. He was once again denied parole and given a review in three years. Thompson voluntarily waived his June 1, 2010 hearing, but chose to appear before the Board for his June 16, 2015 review hearing.

III. PAROLE HEARING ON JUNE 16, 2015

Thompson has served 26 years of his sentence, having spent the first six and a half years of his sentence at Norfolk. In 1998, he sustained a serious foot injury. Since that time, he has been housed in the assisted living unit at MCI Shirley-Medium and his mobility depends upon a wheelchair. He has had no disciplinary reports, except a minor incident for possessing a broken hot pot. His program involvement is still virtually non-existent, however, and only includes taking pre-GED classes (he has not yet earned his GED) and AIDS Awareness.

This hearing was not very different from his previous hearings. Thompson accepted full responsibility for killing Ms. Roque and says that he regrets his actions every day. He acknowledged that the shooting was based on jealousy, which he now concedes was factually unjustified. He told the Board that his fears of the victim's infidelity were not supported by any evidence and said, "It was all in my head." He said that on the day of the murder, he and Ms. Roque were arguing over his accusations that she was cheating on him. He said that he got

angry, reached under the bed, pulled out his gun, and shot her. He told the Board that "the devil made me do it." He could not explain why (after shooting her) he put Ms. Roque on the phone with her sister, rather than immediately seeking emergency medical care for her.

He was unable to explain his rationale, or offer any explanation, for not listening to prior Parole Board suggestions that he participate in rehabilitative programming in the past 26 years. Thompson admitted that he made the wrong decision about not taking the Board's advice after his last hearing to enroll in programming, but offered the justification that he was confined to a wheelchair. While this might have required accommodation on the part of Corrections personnel, it does not make program participation impossible. He also told the Board that his lack of effort to enroll in any programming is because he is "just lazy, I guess."

Thompson has an immigration detainer lodged against him and if granted parole, he is facing possible deportation to Barbados. Therefore, part of the discussion at his hearing involved what support might be available to him in Barbados. He stated that after his mother passed away, she left him her house. However, he does not know its current condition and stated that he does not have contact with any family left in Barbados.

Thompson had no support at the hearing. Speaking in opposition was Bristol County Assistant District Attorney Aaron Strojny, who expressed the view that Thompson showed no remorse and that he brought the gun with him on the weekend of the crime with the intent to kill the victim. The victim's son also spoke in opposition to parole, stating that the hearing brought back bad memories about the loss of his mother. Several members of the victim's family submitted a joint letter opposing parole for Thompson.

IV. DECISION

Thompson's lack of program involvement since his last parole hearing means that he remains unsuitable for parole. The Board had previously suggested participation in the CRA program and that he take steps to address issues surrounding anger and violence. After 26 years of incarceration, Thompson has yet to enroll in any rehabilitative programming. Thompson's complete lack of motivation regarding rehabilitation, as well as his inability to address the causative factors of his crime, remains of great concern to the Board. As he continues to refuse the Board's suggestions (and since has not demonstrated progress towards rehabilitation), the Board determines that, once again, he is not a suitable candidate for parole.

The standard we apply in assessing candidates for parole is set out in 120 CMR Sec. 300.04, which provides that "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." After careful consideration of all relevant facts, the Board unanimously concludes that Carl Thompson does not meet the legal standard for parole. Parole is denied with a review in 5 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.



Michael J. Callahan, General Counsel

August 5, 2015

Date