

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CHARLES CHAPLES

W39624

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 17, 2022

DATE OF DECISION: September 29, 2022

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS¹: Gloriann Moroney, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, 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 the 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 three years from the date of the hearing.²

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On March 24, 1983, in Bristol Superior Court, Charles Chaples pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the death of Raymond Santos. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. He also received concurrent sentences of 3-5 years for larceny and for breaking and entering with intent to commit a felony.

During the early morning hours of March 6, 1982, Charles Chaples broke into a house in Dartmouth and stole a 12-gauge shotgun, two boxes of shotgun shells, and a pair of gloves. He proceeded to an area behind Lincoln Park in North Dartmouth, where he parked his vehicle. He walked through a wooded area into the park and hid behind one of the amusement rides to

¹ Board member Dupre was present for the hearing but was no longer a board member at the time of the vote.

² One board member voted to deny parole with a review scheduled in two years from the date of the hearing.

observe the activity of the night watchmen. When Mr. Chaples observed Raymond Santos, a night watchman, proceed to his station, he scuffled his feet to get his attention. Mr. Santos turned around and shined a flashlight into Mr. Chaples' face. Mr. Chaples told him to shut off the flashlight and turn over the watchman's keys. Mr. Santos refused. When he repeated his demands a second time, Mr. Santos refused again. Mr. Chaples then fired the shotgun at Mr. Santos, ejecting the spent shell. He fired a second time, ejecting the shell again. After he fired a third time, Mr. Santos fell to the ground. Mr. Chaples left the area, reloaded the shotgun, and exited through the same wooded area where he had entered. Along the way, he accidentally dropped live shotgun shells and intentionally concealed other shells within the wooded area. Mr. Chaples wiped down the shotgun, dropped it in a briar patch, and then left the scene.

On March 6, 1982, police were dispatched to the maintenance warehouse at Lincoln Park, where personnel had discovered the body of Raymond Santos at approximately 7:30 a.m. Mr. Chaples was interviewed by police the following day and later confessed to the murder.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 17, 2022³

Charles Chaples, now 62-years-old, appeared for a review hearing on May 17, 2022. He was represented by Attorney Michael Phelan. Mr. Chaples had been released on parole on several occasions, but was returned to custody each time, most recently in 2021. His parole revocation was affirmed on February 11, 2022. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Chaples apologized for the actions that led to his recent revocation.

Board Members questioned him about the two violations of associating with someone involved with criminal behavior, as well as the two violations involving irresponsible conduct surrounding contact with a woman. The woman (who was 32 years younger than him) reported that Mr. Chaples had engaged in stalking behavior, which included calling her almost 100 times a day and expressing an unwanted romantic interest. The Board noted that Mr. Chaples accumulated accusations of criminal conduct during his prior releases, including a substantiated charge for breaking a girlfriend's collarbone, for which he received a two year committed sentence.

Mr. Chaples told the Board that he incurred his last disciplinary report, which he received for assaulting a cellmate, in 2013. He stated that he has been sober for almost 45 years. He attends counseling, although he has not been prescribed any mental health medication at this time. Mr. Chaples reported a loss of feeling in his leg after back surgery during his most recent parole supervision. If paroled again, Mr. Chaples plans to participate in a re-entry program before living with his brother and resuming employment.

The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Mr. Chaples' brother and father. The Board considered testimony and a letter of opposition from the Bristol County District Attorney's Office.

III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Charles Chaples has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr.

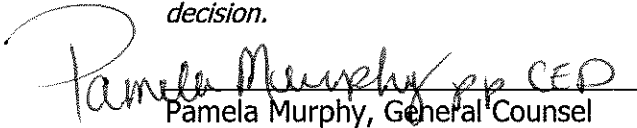
³ The entire video recording of Mr. Chaples' May 17, 2022 hearing is fully incorporated by reference into the Board's decision.

Chaples has been paroled on four prior occasions and has been returned to custody each time due to a concerning pattern of behavior with women, all to include domestic abuse. Mr. Chaples presented as not being forthcoming regarding the circumstances surrounding his parole violations. The Board is concerned that he does not take responsibility for his behavior while on parole. Mr. Chaples' actions are indicative of someone who takes advantage of vulnerable women. Mr. Chaples minimizes his troublesome behavior and deflects responsibility. He should avail himself of all available domestic violence treatment programming and counseling to address the Board's concerns.

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. Chaples' 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. Chaples' risk of recidivism. Applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Chaples' case, the Board is of the opinion that Charles Chaples is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Chaples' next appearance before the Board will take place in three years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Chaples 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.


Pamela Murphy, General Counsel


Date