

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CHARLES CHASE

W53730

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: December 1, 2020

DATE OF DECISION: November 9, 2021

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 three years from the date of this hearing.¹

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On May 26, 1993, after a jury trial in Bristol Superior Court, Charles Chase was found guilty of second degree murder in the death of Albert Renauld. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.² On that same date, he received a 14 to 15 year sentence for theft of a motor vehicle, as well as a 3 to 5 year sentence for larceny. Both sentences were ordered to run concurrently with his life sentence.

On November 4, 1993, in Bristol Superior Court, Mr. Chase was convicted of armed robbery and received a sentence of 15 to 20 years. On that same date, he was also convicted of two counts of assault by means of a dangerous weapon, for which he received concurrent sentences of 3 to 5 years, as well as possession of an illegal firearm, for which he received a

¹ The warrant lodged commitment number NBE15998 is withdrawn.

² Mr. Chase's co-defendants were Roy Farias and Christopher Gluchaki.

concurrent sentence of 2.5 to 5 years. Then, on June 1, 1994, in Bristol Superior Court, Mr. Chase was convicted of armed robbery and two counts of armed robbery while masked. He received concurrent sentences of 15 to 20 years for each. On that same date, he was also convicted of assault by means of a dangerous weapon and received a concurrent sentence of 3 to 5 years. All of these sentences were ordered to run from and after his life sentence.

On October 22, 1991, Charles Chase and Roy Farias went to the mall in North Dartmouth, where Mr. Chase broke into Albert Renauld's tool truck, "jimmied" the ignition, and started the engine. When Mr. Renauld emerged from the mall, he began to run toward the driver's side door of his truck. Mr. Chase then drove directly toward him without slowing down. Mr. Renauld was struck in the chest and stomach by the door of the truck and thrown into the air. As Mr. Renauld lay on the ground, Mr. Chase continued driving. The following day, Mr. Renauld succumbed to his injuries resulting from the impact.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON DECEMBER 1, 2020

Charles Chase, now 54-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on December 1, 2020. He was represented by Attorney Brian Kelly. Mr. Chase was denied parole after his initial hearing in 2007, and after his review hearing in 2015. Mr. Chase postponed his 2012 hearing. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Chase apologized to the victim's family for his actions. He accepted full responsibility for his crime and expressed regret for failing to do so at previous hearings. Mr. Chase claimed to be "making amends" through his rehabilitative efforts and acknowledged the harm his crimes have caused.

Board Members questioned Mr. Chase as to the circumstances surrounding the governing offense, noting that he was on parole supervision at the time. Mr. Chase explained that he had maintained an "I don't care" mentality, often turning to violence to handle his problems. In addition, Mr. Chase admitted to the Board that he "liked using guns." When questioned as to the motivation behind the crime, Mr. Chase explained that he was struggling financially and, because he was "stupid" and "childish," he resorted to stealing instead of reaching out to his family for help. His propensity for violence began in high school, where he frequently engaged in physical altercations and studied different forms of martial arts. When asked about his previous attempts to shift blame to Mr. Renauld, Mr. Chase now accepts full responsibility for his crime, stating, "I can't believe I had the audacity to blame someone I killed."

While incarcerated, Mr. Chase spent approximately 19-years in the Departmental Disciplinary Unit (DDU). He cited his violent and combative behavior as to the reason for his DDU sanctions. Mr. Chase admitted to instigating fights with correctional officers and other inmates. He reflected on his erratic behavior and told the Board that he "could not control himself." When Board Members inquired about his time spent in segregation, Mr. Chase explained that his time in DDU played an integral part in his rehabilitative efforts. Once he returned to general population, Mr. Chase indicated he began to engage in programs, which was his "turning point." Mr. Chase indicated he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as a result of his time spent in segregation for which he sought counseling, although not on a regular basis.

Board Members noted that Mr. Chase recently has made strides towards his rehabilitation since his last hearing. When asked what precipitated this change, Mr. Chase

explained that programming "turned everything around" for him, as he was able to work on himself and recognize his own culpability. He explained he completed programs, such as Anger Management, Alternatives to Violence, and Criminal Thinking, and was taught how to "respond in a non-violent" manner. Moreover, he indicated he was able to address his violent history and share his experience with other participants in a group setting. After reading an article about Mr. Renauld's death, Mr. Chase told the Board he realized that his "callous" actions caused a lasting impact on the Renauld family.

Board Members discussed Mr. Chase's concerning institutional adjustment, noting his lengthy criminal and violent history. While Board Members recognize that Mr. Chase has shown significant progress, they questioned whether he's gained insight as to his problematic behavior. At the time, Mr. Chase told the Board he "didn't care" about his violent and anti-social demeanor because he thought he would never "see freedom again." He cited his environment and his mental health issues as contributing factors to his poor adjustment, describing himself as "violent and hateful" and his behavior as "ugly." When Board Members asked how many people he victimized, Mr. Chase stated, "Too many." The Board questioned Mr. Chase as to his affiliation and leadership role within a white supremacy group, where DOC classified him as a certified member. Although he denied having a leadership role, Mr. Chase admitted to "getting the group together" and creating art that portrays the group's messages. However, he claimed that he no longer has "those beliefs" and has since disassociated from that group.

The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Mr. Chase's father. The Board considered testimony in opposition to parole from Bristol County Assistant District Attorney Jason Mohan.

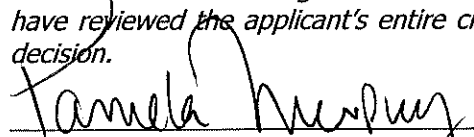
III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Charles Chase has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Although recent progress has been made in terms of conduct, adjustment, and participation in programs, the Board remains concerned that a longer period of continued positive adjustment is necessary. Subject has had approximately 200 disciplinary reports during his incarceration and spent approximately 19 years in segregation. Subject was on parole supervision for approximately 49 days at the time of the governing offense. The Board recommends that he continue to engage in programming that will enhance his rehabilitation and further address his causative factors. The Board notes he is engaged in mental health treatment from which he appears to be benefitting and should continue to engage in that treatment.

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. Chase'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. Chase's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Chase's case, the Board is of the opinion that Charles Chase does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Chase's next appearance before the Board will take place in three years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Chase to continue working towards 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

11/9/2021
Date