

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

12 Mercer Road
Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn Polito
Lieutenant Governor

Daniel Bennett
Secretary

Telephone # (508) 650-4500

Facsimile # (508) 650-4599

Paul M. Treseler
Chairperson

Gloriann Moroney
Executive Director
General Counsel

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CHRISTOPHER BOUSQUET

W44500

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: December 14, 2017

DATE OF DECISION: October 16, 2018

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Paul M. Treseler, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Lucy Soto-Abbe

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 that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole.¹ Parole is denied with a review scheduled in three years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On February 10, 1988, after a jury trial in Bristol Superior Court, Christopher Bousquet was convicted of the first degree murder of Lisa Lachance and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Mr. Bousquet unsuccessfully appealed his convictions on the theories that he should have been tried in juvenile court, he acted in self-defense, and his voluntary intoxication negated the specific intent required for first degree murder.²

On June 14, 1982, Christopher Bousquet and Lisa Lachance (both 16-years-old) went into a wooded area in Swansea to smoke hashish. At some point, the two teens had a disagreement. Mr. Bousquet punched Ms. Lachance with brass knuckles and then stabbed her, at least, 29 times.

¹ One Board Member voted to reserve to an approved home plan after one year in lower security.

² *Commonwealth v. Christopher Bousquet*, 407 Mass. 854 (1990)

After the murder, Mr. Bousquet robbed the victim and fled. Ms. Lachance's murder was undiscovered for two years until her skeletal remains were found. After Ms. Lachance's body was found, friends of Mr. Bousquet told police that he had bragged about killing a girl. When Mr. Bousquet was arrested, he confessed to the murder.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON DECEMBER 14, 2017

On December 24, 2013, the Supreme Judicial Court issued a decision in *Diatchenko v. District Attorney for Suffolk District & Others*, 466 Mass. 655 (2013), in which the Court determined that the statutory provisions mandating life without the possibility of parole are invalid as applied to juveniles convicted of first degree murder. Further, the Court decided that such juvenile offenders must be given a parole hearing. Accordingly, Mr. Bousquet was granted an initial hearing before the Parole Board on December 18, 2014. He was denied parole at this hearing.

Christopher Bousquet, now 51-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on December 14, 2017. He was represented by Attorney Elizabeth Lunt. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Bousquet admitted that he was responsible for killing Ms. Lachance. Mr. Bousquet apologized to the victim's family and expressed his remorse. Attorney Lunt asked the Board to review the psychological evaluation submitted in support of Mr. Bousquet's request for parole. When the Board questioned Mr. Bousquet about his childhood, he said that he attended special education classes and was bullied by other kids as a teen. Mr. Bousquet said that he used drugs, such as hashish and mescaline, as an escape.

When Board Members questioned Mr. Bousquet as to why he killed Ms. Lachance, he claimed that he did not know. However, he suggested that playing around with drugs and knives contributed to his actions, along with pent up anger over being victimized by his peers. Mr. Bousquet said that he probably targeted Ms. Lachance since she was weak, and he wanted to see what it was like to hurt someone. Mr. Bousquet told the Board he had taken hallucinogens and smoked hash at the time of the murder, so the details leading up to the murder were foggy. He stated that he has no memory of stabbing Ms. Lachance.

The Board noted that Mr. Bousquet has not had any disciplinary reports in over 17 years. Regarding his involvement in programming, Mr. Bousquet said that he completed many programs since his last hearing, including Emotional Awareness, Restorative Justice II: Repairing Harm, Victim Impact/Restorative Justice, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (C.B.T.), Criminal Thinking, and Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Step Program. For his parole plan, Mr. Bousquet requested release to a sober house, after serving 6 to 9 months at a lower security facility. Mr. Bousquet would then like to live at the Zen Center in Cambridge, study at a culinary school, and work in the field. Mr. Bousquet has support of family, friends, and mentors in the community.

Mr. Bousquet's parents and a mentor testified in support of parole. A friend also sent a letter in support of parole. Members of the Lachance family testified, and sent letters, in opposition to parole. Dr. Robert Kinscherff prepared and submitted a psychological evaluation to the Board and testified about his findings. Bristol County Assistant District Attorney Dennis Collins testified in opposition to parole. Robert Furtado, Swansea Deputy Chief of Police (Retired), submitted a letter in opposition to parole.

III. DECISION

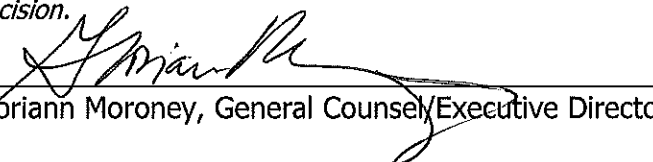
The Board is of the opinion that Christopher Bousquet has not yet demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. In their deliberations, the Board did take into consideration Mr. Bousquet's age and maturity at the time of the offense. The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Bousquet is minimizing his criminal culpability. Mr. Bousquet should continue to invest in his rehabilitation and complete Restorative Justice and maintain a positive adjustment.

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 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 the 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).

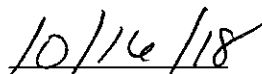
The factors considered by the Board include the offender's "lack of maturity and an underdeveloped sense of responsibility, leading to recklessness, impulsivity, and heedless risk-taking; vulnerability to negative influences and outside pressures, including from their family and peers; limited control 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 20-40. The Board also has considered whether risk reduction could effectively minimize Mr. Bousquet's recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Bousquet's case, the Board is of the opinion that Christopher Bousquet's release is not compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Bousquet, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

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



Gloriann Moroney, General Counsel/Executive Director



Date