

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CORNELIUS EVANS
W99937

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: February 20, 2025

DATE OF DECISION: June 30, 2025

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander,¹ Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman,² Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley,³ James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in 2 years from the date of the hearing.⁴

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On November 29, 2011, in Suffolk Superior Court, Cornelius Evans was convicted of murder in the second degree for the death of Charles Cantave. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he also pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm without an FID card and received a sentence of 3 years to 3 years and one day to run concurrently with his life sentence. On February 20, 2025, Mr. Evans appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was not represented by an attorney. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Cornelius Evans' February 20, 2025 hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On March 29, 2010, in Dorchester, 34-year-old Cornelius Evans shot and killed 26-year-old Charles Cantave. Mr. Evans was arrested a short time later along with his co-defendant Mario Burns. On Monday, March 29, 2010, Boston police officers responded to the area of Washington Street and Park Street in Dorchester due to a report of

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

² 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.

³ Chair Hurley participated in the vote on this matter prior to her departure from the Board.

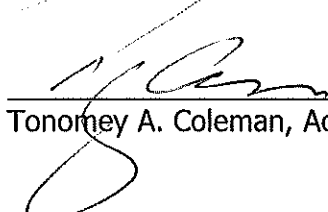
⁴ Two Board Members voted to deny parole with a review in 3 years.

shots fired shortly before 11:00 am. Officers discovered the body of 26-year-old Charles Cantave inside his motor vehicle, parked in a lot at 451 Washington Street. Medical examiners determined the cause of death to be a single gunshot wound to the head. On the morning of the murder, Mario Burns and his wife were in Dorchester District Court for a hearing on a small claims action that Mr. Burns' wife had filed against Mr. Cantave. She had alleged in court papers, and at the hearing, that Mr. Cantave had sold her a faulty engine. After the hearing, Mr. Burns and his wife entered her Chevy Suburban, accompanied by Cornelius Evans. As Mr. Cantave crossed the street in front of their vehicle and walked to his car, Mr. Burns (the driver) pointed out Mr. Cantave to Mr. Evans (the front passenger). Mr. Burns stopped the car on Park Street as Mr. Evans ran to Mr. Cantave's car, shot him once, and then re-entered Mr. Burns' car.

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. Evans presented to the Board for his first hearing. He was 34-years-old at the time of the offense. He is currently 49-years-old. Mr. Evans has struggled with an addiction for over 30 years. He was candid during the hearing and reports that he continues to have difficulty managing his sobriety. He is on MAT and states that he has chronic insomnia. Mr. Evans presents with significant trauma history. He has invested in meaningful programs, but understands he has more work to do. The Board recommends he continue to work with mental health to address his trauma history. Mr. Evans presented as open to Board recommendations and feedback. Mr. Evans has family support. He is recommended to remain disciplinary report free, obtain employment, and continue with investment in self-development and rehabilitation. Two individuals testified in support of parole. Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Montez Haywood testified in opposition to parole. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Cornelius Evans 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.


Tonomey A. Coleman, Acting Chair


Date