

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*

**PAROLE BOARD**

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**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**DENNIS PAUL**  
**W33970**

**TYPE OF HEARING:**        **Review Hearing**

**DATE OF HEARING:**       **September 28, 2023**

**DATE OF DECISION:**     **January 4, 2024**

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Tina M. Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, James Kelcourse

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On September 11, 1974, in Plymouth Superior Court, Dennis Paul pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of fellow inmate, Edward Rastellini, at Bridgewater State Hospital. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. Mr. Rastellini was stabbed to death with a sharpened butter knife on November 6, 1973. The autopsy revealed the cause of death to be seven stab wounds, which penetrated Mr. Rastellini's chest wall. Mr. Paul (age 20) and his co-defendants believed Mr. Rastellini to be an informant, who gave officials information about their plans to escape the institution. Mr. Paul pleaded guilty to the murder and testified against his co-defendants in the case.

At the time this sentence was imposed, Mr. Paul was already serving a 15 to 20 year sentence for manslaughter, a 15 to 20 year sentence for armed robbery, a 5 to 10 year sentence for armed robbery, and a 3 to 5 year sentence for unlawfully carrying a firearm. The sentences were imposed on February 6, 1973, and run concurrently to his life sentence. These offenses resulted from an armed robbery of a Radio Shack store in Revere, after which Mr. Paul was involved in a car chase. During the chase, Mr. Paul crashed into another vehicle, killing a female passenger, Mae Molander, and injuring five others. He had been awaiting trial on firearm and motor vehicle charges at the time he committed these offenses.

**PAROLE HEARING:** Dennis Paul appeared before the Board on September 28, 2023. He was not represented by legal counsel. He previously appeared before the Board and was denied parole in 1989, 1992, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2012, and 2021. His 2017 hearing was

postponed. The Board's decision fully incorporates, by reference, the entire video recording of Dennis Paul's September 28, 2023 hearing.

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** 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.


After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of 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 or in written submissions to the Board, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole, subject to special conditions.

In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Dennis Paul'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. Paul's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Paul's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Dennis Paul is rehabilitated and, therefore, merits parole at this time.

Parole is granted to his consecutive sentence in Rhode Island. This is Mr. Paul's eleventh appearance before the Board. He is currently 70-years-old and has been incarcerated 52 years. Mr. Paul appears to have invested in his substance use recovery. He is now involved with MAT and attends AA/NA. He is enrolled in the substance abuse treatment program and the Sunshine program. Mr. Paul suffers from a history of medical issues that were considered by the Board. Mr. Paul is in need of a transitional program, where he can receive support and continue to invest in his sobriety. Mr. Paul has identified a step-down program in Rhode Island that will meet his needs. He presents as ready to avail himself of more opportunities that he will receive via his transitional program and community AA/NA resources. He will benefit from more frequent counseling that he can receive in the community. ADA Karen Polumbo from Plymouth District Attorney's Office spoke in opposition to parole.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Release to Rhode Island sentence; Waive work for retirement; Curfew - must be home between 10 pm and 6 am or at PO's discretion; ELMO-electronic monitoring at PO's discretion; Supervise for drugs - testing in accordance with Agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence - testing in accordance with Agency policy; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; No contact with victims' family; Must have mental health counseling for transitional purposes - has been incarcerated; Long-term residential program; AA/NA at least 3 times per week.

*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.*

  
Tina M. Hurley, Chair

1/4/24  
Date