



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



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

Dexter Hallett

W32697

TYPE OF HEARING: **Review Hearing**

DATE OF HEARING: **May 25, 2017**

DATE OF DECISION: **May 15, 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 by unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review scheduled in five years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On July 23, 1969, the mother of Mary Lou (Lu) Cronin went to the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and requested that the disappearance of her daughter be investigated. Detectives spoke with neighbors and friends of the Cronin family and established the relationship between Dexter Hallett and the Cronin family. On July 30, 1969, detectives spoke with Mr. Hallett in the employee's parking lot of the Transition Company in East Boston. Mr. Hallett told the detectives that he left Mary Lu at the steps leading to Highland Beach. He said he went home for a short time and then went to Hurley's Bar at Revere Beach. As a result of information obtained at Hurley's and from other witnesses, Mr. Hallett was asked to come to the District Attorney's Office on July 31, 1969. He was advised of his rights and he agreed to

answer questions. Mr. Hallett said that Mary Lu's body was under his house. He agreed to accompany the detectives to his house and to show them where the body was located. On July 31, 1969, detectives found Mary Lu's body (covered with plastic bags) in the crawl space under the home of Dexter Hallett at 13 Beachland Street in Revere. Mr. Hallett said that he found Mary Lu's body (clad only in a sweatshirt) on July 21, 1969, when he went down into a crawl space under his house to repair a leaky faucet. Mr. Hallett said that he had taken plastic bags from his home and covered Mary Lu's body. He left, telling no one.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 25, 2017

Dexter Hallett, now 75-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for his review hearing on May 25, 2017. He was not represented by counsel. He was denied parole after his initial hearing in 1984, as well as at subsequent hearings in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1995, 2001, 2005, and 2010. He waived his 2015 hearing. In 2016, his petition for a reconsideration hearing was approved. At this hearing, Mr. Hallett did not provide an opening statement.

Board Members remain disturbed as to the various versions of the offense, as presented by Mr. Hallett, that span decades. Mr. Hallett claims (on the day of Ms. Cronin's disappearance) to have driven the victim to the beach during the mid-afternoon hours. Later that afternoon, she showed up unexpectedly at his home, requesting a ride home. Mr. Hallett informed her that she would have to wait until he sobered up. At some point, Mr. Hallett observed her going through personal items in his bedroom. He reprimanded her, struck her in the head, and watched her fall to the ground. Mr. Hallett then proceeded to leave the house and continued to imbibe at a local establishment. He informed the Board that he can't recall what happened next, stating, "I imagine, I put the body away." It was while being questioned by police, approximately three weeks later, that he stated, "While I went under my house to check the water pipes, I seen her body there."

Mr. Hallett vehemently denies any inappropriate sexual contact, or to sexually assaulting the victim. This contradicts witness testimony as to the predatory behavior exhibited by Mr. Hallett, leading up to her murder. Although, it remains unclear as to whether a sexual assault occurred, the Board continues to reject Mr. Hallett's version as to why the victim was found nude from the waist down. The body, badly decomposed, was found in a crawl space under Mr. Hallett's bedroom, an area only accessible and known by him. Additionally, Department of Correction records indicate that Mr. Hallett disclosed to Massachusetts Treatment Center staff that he had, in fact, performed oral sex on the victim prior to her murder. At the time of his arrest, he was found to be in possession of child pornography. Today, Mr. Hallett concedes he is only guilty of slapping her.

The Board discussed Mr. Hallett's institutional adjustment since his last hearing. Mr. Hallett is currently incarcerated at MCI-Norfolk, where he is not employed and does not participate in programming. He has not engaged in any programming, since he last appeared before the Board in 2010.

The Board considered testimony from the victim's sister, who expressed strong opposition to parole. Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Charles Bartoloni spoke in strong opposition to parole.

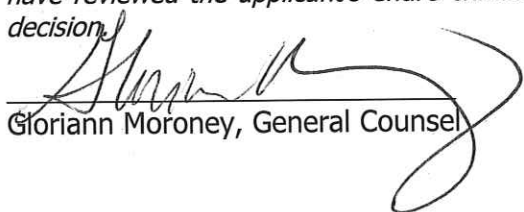
III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Dexter Hallett has not yet demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Hallett has served approximately 38 years for the murder of 12-year-old Mary Lu Cronin. Mr. Hallett minimizes the severity of the offense, and he lacks insight. Additionally, he has yet to engage in relevant programming to address his causative factors. For almost four decades, he has yet to fully disclose his culpability.

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. Hallett'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. Hallett's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Hallett's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Dexter Hallett is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

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


Gloriann Moroney, General Counsel

5/15/18
Date