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PAROLE BOARD

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Tina M. Hurley
Chair

Daniel Nakamoto
Acting Executive Director

RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

DOUGLAS COOMBS

W45327

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: April 4, 2023

DATE OF DECISION: June 8, 2023

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Dr. Maryanne Galvin, James Kelcourse, Colette Santa

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On January 22, 1982, in Suffolk Superior Court, Douglas Coombs pleaded guilty to rape and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. This sentence was ordered to run from and after the 12-year sentence Mr. Coombs was already serving for rape.¹

Mr. Coombs appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on April 4, 2023. He was represented by Attorney Rebecca Rose. Mr. Coombs was denied parole after his initial hearing in 2000 and after his review hearings in 2005 and 2013. He postponed his 2017 review hearing. He was granted parole after his 2021 review hearing but was revoked due to parole violations. This was Mr. Coombs's first appearance before the Board since his parole was revoked in October 2022. The entire video recording of Mr. Coombs's April 4, 2023, hearing is fully incorporated by reference to the Board's decision.

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 a suitable candidate for parole.²

¹ At the time he committed the governing offense, Mr. Coombs was on work release from his 12-year sentence and was residing at a Boston Pre-Release transitional housing program.

² Four Board members voted to grant parole and two Board members voted to deny parole with a review in one year.

The Board is of the opinion that Douglas Coombs has demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Reserve to Keenan House – North in North Adams after DA clearance. Mr. Coombs, then 24 years old, raped a 34-year-old woman in Boston. Mr. Coombs was released on parole to CRJ on April 22, 2022. He was returned to custody and his parole was revoked after his unsuccessful discharge from CRJ. He scores Low/Low on the COMPAS. He has gained insight and accepts responsibility as to his failures on parole supervision. He will benefit from counseling to aid in his reentry and to address his mental health needs. Mr. Coombs should work closely with his parole officer and support network to fully appreciate what is expected of him while on parole supervision. The Board encourages him to exercise better judgment upon release and demonstrate that he is appreciative of his status as a parolee.

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. Coombs'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. Coombs's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Coombs's case, the Board is of the opinion that Douglas Coombs is rehabilitated and, therefore, merits parole at this time.

Special Conditions: Reserve to Keenan House - North; Waive work for program; Curfew – Must be at home between 10pm and 6am; ELMO-electronic monitoring; 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 victim's family; No contact with victim(s); Must have mental health evaluation and follow recommended treatment plan; Counseling for adjustment/transition; Mandatory – DA clearance.

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

6/8/23
Date