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

**PAROLE BOARD**

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Paul M. Treseler  
Chairman

Michael J. Callahan  
Executive Director

**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**EDMUND HENNESSEY**

**W39303**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** October 27, 2015

**DATE OF DECISION:** December 14, 2015

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

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying 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 in four years from the date of the hearing.

**I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

On November 8, 1982, in Suffolk Superior Court, Edmund Hennessey was convicted of the second degree murder of Michael T. Lument. Subsequently he was sentenced to life in prison, with the possibility of parole. Mr. Hennessey is currently 64 years old.

During October of 1981, Mr. Hennessey was unemployed and spending his days in the Boston Commons, drinking and taking drugs. On the afternoon of Mr. Lument's death, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mr. Hennessey was in the Commons with a friend, William Dorsey. Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Dorsey approached Mr. Lument in the area of the Park Street MBTA Station. Mr. Hennessey knew Mr. Lument from a prior incident in the Commons that occurred on September 30, 1981. During that prior incident, Mr. Hennessey stabbed Mr. Lument's dog because it urinated on his pant leg. After stabbing the dog, Mr. Hennessey fought with Mr. Lument, who wrapped the dog in a sweatshirt and fled the scene in a taxi cab.



Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Dorsey approached Mr. Lument from behind and attacked him. Defending himself, Mr. Lument struggled with Mr. Dorsey after striking him with a dog chain. The struggle continued until Mr. Hennessey slid a knife from his coat sleeve and stabbed Mr. Lument in the chest, perforating his heart. Screaming out "He stabbed me, call the police," Mr. Lument ran to Park Street Station. Both Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Dorsey fled the scene in different directions. Prior to leaving, Mr. Hennessey picked up a bag from the ground that Mr. Lument had left behind. Later that afternoon, Mr. Lument died from his wounds.

## **II. PAROLE HEARING ON OCTOBER 27, 2015**

Mr. Hennessey came before the Parole Board on October 27, 2015 for a review hearing. During the hearing, Mr. Hennessey was represented by student attorneys Emma Rekart and Mihal Ansik from the Harvard Prison Legal Assistance Project. This was his fifth appearance before the Board. Mr. Hennessey was first eligible for parole in 1996 when he appeared before the Board for his initial hearing. He subsequently appeared for review hearings in October 2001, 2005 and 2010, all of which were denied.

Mr. Hennessey gave an opening statement to the Board, in which he apologized to Mr. Lument's family and accepted responsibility for his actions. At the time of Mr. Lument's murder, Mr. Hennessey was estranged from his wife and three year old son due to his alcohol abuse. Mr. Hennessey told the Board he began abusing drugs and alcohol at a young age, as a result of sexual abuse he suffered during his childhood.

Over the course of the hearing, Mr. Hennessey spoke about the afternoon of the murder. Mr. Hennessey told the Board he had been drinking the previous night and on the morning of the murder. Earlier in the day, he met Mr. Dorsey on the train where both men continued to drink. Mr. Hennessey acknowledged stabbing Mr. Lument's dog on a prior occasion and claimed that Mr. Lument attacked him with a dog chain during that incident. According to Mr. Hennessey, the confrontation with Mr. Lument occurred after both he and Mr. Dorsey entered the park. Mr. Hennessey described Mr. Dorsey as attacking Mr. Lument first. Mr. Hennessey eventually became involved in the altercation and stabbed Mr. Lument because he believed Mr. Lument was going to attack him with a chain. After the murder, Mr. Hennessey fled to a train station and passed out. When he awoke, Mr. Hennessey returned to his apartment in Charlestown with Mr. Lument's bag. After seeing a news report about the murder, he turned himself into the police.

When questioned by the Board, Mr. Hennessey admitted to exaggerating portions of his testimony. He further expressed to the Board that he did not find it surprising his life had ended with his incarceration for murder. Mr. Hennessey described his life and struggle with substance abuse as a "work in progress" and acknowledged frequent "slips" with his sobriety, most recently in 2014. In the past year Mr. Hennessey has been involved in three separate disciplinary incidents at MCI-Shirley, the medium security facility where he is presently serving his sentence.

The Board did not receive any live testimony from law enforcement officials at the hearing but did take into consideration a letter opposing Mr. Hennessey's release, from the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office. Mr. Hennessey's sister appeared before the Board and gave testimony on his behalf. She expressed her belief that Mr. Hennessey had made progress since his incarceration began. Mr. Hennessey's sister also described the difficulty she and other family members, who reside out of state, have with visiting him in prison. Mr. Hennessey remains estranged from his son.



### **III. DECISION**

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Hennessey has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. The Board believes a longer period of positive institutional adjustment and programming, including substance abuse counseling and remaining discipline report free, would be beneficial to Mr. Hennessey's rehabilitation.

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 applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Hennessey's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Mr. Hennessey is not yet rehabilitated and therefore does not merit parole at this time. In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Mr. Hennessey'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 whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Hennessey's risk of recidivism.

During his incarceration, Mr. Hennessey has taken advantage of a number of institutional programs and activities. Since entering custody, Mr. Hennessey has earned his High School Equivalency Diploma, received vocational job skills training, and recently completed the Correctional Recovery Academy. Mr. Hennessey has also participated in programs that taught legal training and computer skills. Additionally, Mr. Hennessey has worked towards addressing his substance abuse and anger management issues through participation in Alcoholics Anonymous and violence reduction programs. He has also taken on a leadership role in two programs, one of which involves mentoring younger inmates dealing with substance abuse issues.

The Board recognizes Mr. Hennessey's efforts to work towards his rehabilitation. Mr. Hennessey's poor institutional behavior, however, is troubling to the Board. Shortly after entering custody, Mr. Hennessey was involved in a fight with another inmate whom he stabbed 14 times. According to Mr. Hennessey, the stabbing was spurred by a gambling debt owed to him by the inmate. Claiming he was not the first aggressor and the inmate's stab wounds were only superficial, Mr. Hennessey expressed little remorse for this incident when questioned by the Board. Mr. Hennessey has also received a plethora of discipline reports related to substance abuse, gambling, and the destruction of institutional property. Mr. Hennessey described numerous ailments he suffers from to the Board, but also admitted to trading his prescription medication for Heroin, while in custody.

Mr. Hennessey's next appearance before the Board will take place in four years from the date of the review hearing related to this decision. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Hennessey to continue working towards his full rehabilitation by committing to programming that will address his substance abuse issues and remaining discipline report free.

*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.*

  
Michael Callahan, Executive Director

December 14, 2015  
Date