



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

JAMES LEBLANC

W38597

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: September 29, 2015

DATE OF DECISION: February 11, 2016

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, 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 in five years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On February 5, 1988, in Middlesex Superior Court, James LeBlanc pled guilty to armed robbery and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, Mr. LeBlanc also pled guilty to kidnapping and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon. All sentences were to run concurrently with the life sentence. Additionally, on December 21, 1988, in Middlesex Superior Court, Mr. LeBlanc pled guilty to aggravated rape and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. The court ordered this second life sentence to run concurrently with his prior life sentence. On April 9, 1990, in Plymouth Superior Court, Mr. LeBlanc pled guilty to escape and was sentenced to not more than five years, and not less than three years, in state prison. This sentence was to be served from and after his life sentence.

In July 1985, Mr. LeBlanc was paroled from a state prison sentence of not more than seven years, and not less than four years, for breaking and entering and larceny. In October 1985, Mr. LeBlanc's whereabouts were unknown and his parole was revoked. Prior to his apprehension by the police, however, Mr. LeBlanc went on a vicious crime spree and committed the rapes, robberies, and assaults for which he is currently incarcerated. At the time of his release in July 1985, Mr. LeBlanc was 24-years-old.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2015

James LeBlanc, now age 54, appeared before the Parole Board on September 29, 2015 for an initial parole hearing and was represented by Student Attorney Lan Mei and Student Attorney Sean Parys. Mr. LeBlanc gave an opening statement to the Board and apologized for his actions. During the course of the hearing, Mr. LeBlanc discussed his criminal behavior and stated that he experienced sexual frustration as a young man. He said that his frustration was due to feelings of inadequacy caused by the rejection of his sexual advances toward women. He cited this rejection as a factor precipitating his violent behavior. Mr. LeBlanc explained to the Board that, as a young man, he acted out rape fantasies with a female acquaintance. He also engaged in voyeuristic behavior, such as watching a couple act out (in what he described as) a simulated rape. Mr. LeBlanc cited these experiences as contributing to the belief he once held that women did not mind being raped, and that it was possible for him to force a woman to be in a relationship with him.

During his appearance before the Board, Mr. LeBlanc rejected the beliefs that he admittedly once held and for which he used to rationalize his crimes. While in custody (and over the course of 25 years), Mr. LeBlanc completed the Sex Offender Treatment Program. Although Mr. LeBlanc expressed his belief to the Board that he was rehabilitated, he stated that he only had a limited understanding of the source of his sexual deviance. He could not readily articulate why it took him 25 years to successfully complete the Sex Offender Treatment Program. In addition to sexual assault, Mr. LeBlanc also has a history of violence. While in the community on a prior parole, Mr. LeBlanc committed numerous crimes of personal violence for which he is currently incarcerated. By his own admission, Mr. LeBlanc estimated that he has victimized approximately 100 people and has escaped from custody on three prior occasions.

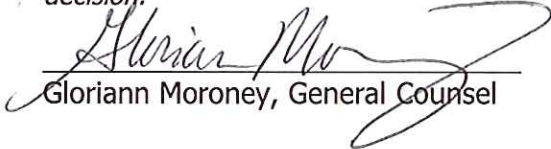
The Board considered testimony from numerous witnesses, both in support of and in opposition to Mr. LeBlanc's petition for parole. Mr. LeBlanc's mother, who spoke on behalf of herself and Mr. LeBlanc's father, described their love for their son, their desire to see him released, and their belief that he would be able to transition back into society. She also expressed their commitment to providing any support necessary to ease this transition. Testimony was also considered from two of Mr. LeBlanc's victims, who described the facts of his offenses and the lasting psychological and emotional effects that Mr. LeBlanc's crimes had on them. The husband of a victim described the effect Mr. LeBlanc's actions had on his wife's well-being and on their marriage. In addition, representatives of both the Norfolk District Attorney's Office and the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office strongly opposed Mr. LeBlanc's release due to the danger he posed to the community.

III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. LeBlanc has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. 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. LeBlanc's institutional behavior, as well as his participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during his incarceration. The Board has also considered whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. LeBlanc's risk of recidivism.

After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. LeBlanc's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that James LeBlanc is not yet rehabilitated, and therefore does not merit parole at this time. Mr. LeBlanc's next appearance before the board will take place five years from the date of this hearing. In the interim, Mr. LeBlanc should 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

2/11/16
Date