



Maura Healey
Governor

Kim Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Terrence Reidy
Secretary

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

12 Mercer Road
Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Telephone # (508) 650-4500

Facsimile # (508) 650-4599



Tina M. Hurley
Chair

RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

JERMAINE CELESTER

W59247

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: November 29, 2022

DATE OF DECISION: January 18, 2023

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

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On September 14, 1995, after a jury trial in Plymouth Superior Court, Jermaine Celester was convicted of first-degree murder and Armed Assault with Intent to Murder. He was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole and a concurrent term of 15 to 20 years, respectively.

On appeal, the Supreme Judicial Court remanded the case to the Superior Court after which a new trial was ordered. On June 12, 2017, following a second jury trial, Jermaine Celester was convicted of second-degree murder in the death of Wakime Woods and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. He was acquitted of Armed Assault with Intent to Murder.

Mr. Celester appeared before the Parole Board for an initial hearing on November 29, 2022. He was represented by student attorneys from Northeastern University School of Law. The entire video recording of Mr. Celester's November 29, 2022, 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 by unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole.

The Board is of the unanimous opinion that Jermaine Celester has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. On February 18, 1994, 21-year-old Mr. Celester shot and killed 19-year-old Wakime Woods. Mr. Celester's criminal history began at the age of fourteen and he was committed to DYS from sixteen to eighteen years old. The Board recognizes Mr. Celester maintains his innocence. However, the Board finds that Mr. Celester needs to do more work to demonstrate insight into the harm the lifestyle he was leading caused not only the victims but also the community at large. Accordingly, the Board encourages him to pursue programming such as Menswork and Anger Management. The Board finds that these programs will help Mr. Celester appreciate the severity of the discord he caused in his community.

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

Mr. Celester's next appearance before the Board will take place in one year from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages him to continue working towards his full rehabilitation.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing.



Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

1/18/23
Date