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PAROLE BOARD

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Josh Wall
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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

KEVIN COE

W38150

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: July 21, 2011

DATE OF DECISION: October 17, 2012

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Cesar Archilla, John Bocon, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Ina Howard-Hogan, Roger Michel, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Josh Wall

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Parole is denied with a review in five years. The decision is unanimous.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Kevin Coe and Shawn Dickinson beat Frank Sikorski to death on July 31, 1980 in Taunton. Coe pleaded guilty to second-degree murder on April 6, 1981. Coe had been using angel dust and drinking for several hours with two brothers, Shawn and Derrick Dickinson, on the night of July 30. They met Frank Sikorski outside a Taunton bar sometime after midnight and asked him for a ride. The victim agreed and gave the three men a ride. Kevin Coe and Shawn Dickinson beat the victim to death, apparently in order to steal his money and car. After disposing of the body in Oakland Pond in Taunton, they robbed a gas station in West Bridgewater at 2:50 a.m. and led police on a high speed chase at 4:00 a.m. They were stopped and arrested at a roadblock in Raynham. After the arrest, Derrick Dickinson gave police information about the murder which led to the charges against Coe and Shawn Dickinson.

Shawn Dickinson's case was tried after Coe pleaded guilty to second-degree murder. Derrick Dickinson was the prosecution's primary witness against his brother. He testified that his brother and Kevin Coe beat the victim to death. After pleading guilty to second-degree murder and robbery of the gas station, Coe testified for the defense and claimed that he beat the victim to death without assistance from Shawn Dickinson. The jury convicted Shawn

Dickinson of first degree murder and he remains incarcerated. In affirming Dickinson's conviction, the Supreme Judicial Court described Coe's testimony as a "flagrant and cynical retreat by the witness from the plea testimony he had given when his own fate was still in the balance."

Coe has been incarcerated for thirty years on the life sentence for murder and a concurrent life sentence for the gas station robbery. He has been denied parole after each of four previous hearings.

Prior to the murder, Coe had a conviction for assault and battery with a dangerous weapon (with a two year state prison sentence), and multiple convictions with county sentences for breaking and entering, stolen motor vehicle, and assault and battery on a police officer. He was committed to DYS for burglary and breaking and entering.

Coe has a previous parole which ended quickly and poorly. In April 1970 he was paroled from a county sentence for stealing a motor vehicle. After only three days he disappeared and was not apprehended until June 1970. After being returned to custody he escaped from the Billerica House of Corrections. He was convicted of escape and received a six month commitment.

II. INSTITUTIONAL CONDUCT

Kevin Coe has a terrible institutional record that gives clear evidence that he is an extraordinarily violent and dangerous person. While awaiting trial for the murder, he, Shawn Dickinson and a third inmate escaped on March 14, 1981 from the Bristol House of Corrections. All three inmates had weapons. They beat one corrections officer and stabbed another corrections officer. All three inmates were captured later that day. Coe was convicted of escape and received a 3 to 5 year sentence from and after the life sentences. Four counts of assault and battery on a corrections officer were placed on file after guilty pleas.

The inmate has 76 disciplinary reports and six returns to higher custody. His disciplinary record shows remarkable amounts of violence and substance abuse. Most of the violence has been directed at corrections officers. On February 24, 1991, he punched and kicked three officers. He has scores of reports for threatening to kill officers, creating disturbances, inciting riots, refusing orders, and insolence. He has also possessed shanks, destroyed property, and set fires. He has ten disciplinary reports related to drugs and alcohol (including refusal to provide a sample for testing).

He has four disciplinary reports since his last hearing in 2007.

III. PAROLE HEARING ON JULY 21, 2011

Kevin Coe testified that in 1980 he was homeless and using drugs and alcohol every day. In describing the crime he admitted he and Shawn Dickinson beat the victim to death. He said that he inflicted more blows than Dickinson. He alleged that the victim provoked him by making a sexual advance and then punching him. Those claims are almost certainly false: Derrick Dickinson did not describe those events in his trial testimony and Coe did not testify to those events at his plea hearing or at Shawn Dickinson's trial. Parole Board members

concluded that these allegations, appearing years later and contradicted by other far more probative evidence, are fabricated by Coe in an ineffective attempt to suggest provocation or mitigation.

The inmate had little or no rehabilitative program participation during most of his incarceration. In 2011, however, he began regular program participation. He has completed Smart Recovery, Emotional Awareness, and two phases of Alternatives to Violence. He does not work. He does not currently receive mental health treatment but in the past received counseling for anxiety issues.


Frank Sikorski's brother-in-law spoke in opposition to parole. There were no supporters of parole in attendance.

IV. DECISION

Kevin Coe beat an innocent man to death for apparently no reason. He then spent decades in prison as a violent, dangerous, and disruptive inmate. It is a good sign that he has recently improved his prison conduct and completed some rehabilitative programs. It is not a good sign that, despite completing programs, he still offers false details about the crime in a misguided attempt to minimize the brutality of his conduct. For most of his life Coe has been guided by criminal thinking and committed to violent behavior. He will need considerable work and time to reform his character and conduct.

Due to lack of rehabilitation, Coe would likely re-offend if released and parole release is not compatible with the welfare of society. Accordingly, parole is denied. Because Coe faces a substantial workload in seeking rehabilitation, it would be counter-productive to shorten the review period from the five year statutory period.

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


Caitlin E. Casey, Chief of Staff

10/17/12
Date