



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

LARRY ROBINSON

W50442

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: November 9, 2017

DATE OF DECISION: September 24, 2018

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

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. Parole is denied with a review scheduled in three years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On April 26, 1991, in Suffolk Superior Court, Larry Robinson pleaded guilty to the second degree murder of 19-year-old Mark Peter Belmore. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On the same day, Mr. Robinson pleaded guilty to armed robbery and was sentenced to a concurrent term of 25-35 years.

On January 14, 1990, Larry Robinson, 20-years-old, went to a movie at 9:50 p.m. with a group of friends. Mr. Robinson was carrying a knife. After the movie (sometime after midnight), Mr. Robinson and his friends were walking toward Columbus Avenue in Roxbury. At some point, the conversation turned to the prospect of attacking someone. Mark Peter Belmore was observed walking on Columbus Avenue towards the Ruggles Street MBTA station. Larry Robinson yelled, "Get him." His companions chased and trapped Mr. Belmore, who screamed for help. When Mr.

Belmore resisted, the men started beating him. Mr. Robinson's co-defendant was seen stabbing Mr. Belmore repeatedly. Mr. Robinson participated in the assault. Prior to being left in the street to die, Mr. Belmore was robbed of his wallet. The medical examiner found five stab wounds of varying depth and severity on the victim's body. The fatal stab wound had severed the victim's aorta. On January 22, 1990, Mr. Robinson turned himself into police.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON NOVEMBER 9, 2017

Larry Robinson, now 47-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on November 9, 2017. He was represented by Reyna Ramirez and Christine Sunnerberg, as supervised by Attorney Patricia DeJuneas. Mr. Robinson had been denied parole after his initial hearing in 2005, as well as after his review hearings in 2010 and 2015.

In Mr. Robinson's opening statement to the Board, he expressed his deepest apologies to the Belmore family and stated that he will never forget what he did to them. He also said that he was a coward for participating in Mr. Belmore's murder. When Mr. Robinson spoke about the facts surrounding the murder, he told the Board he knew Mr. Belmore had already been stabbed prior to his involvement. The Board questioned Mr. Robinson as to whether the murder was racially motivated. Mr. Robinson explained that he said to "get Mr. Belmore," but that he did not make reference to his race. He stated that there was never a motivation to get a "white person." A Board Member asked Mr. Robinson if he spoke to his co-defendant, Mr. Herbert, after Mr. Herbert's parole hearing. Mr. Robinson stated that he had. The Board noted that Mr. Herbert told the Board that it was a racially motivated crime. It was also noted by a Board Member that Mr. Herbert's confession included information that they decided to rob the first white person that they saw, and that Mr. Herbert quoted Mr. Robinson as saying so. Mr. Robinson stated that it could have been Mr. Herbert's motivation, but that it was not his own. He stated that the motivation was to "rob someone," but that he doesn't remember any discussions about race prior to the murder. When a Board Member asked Mr. Robinson who he held responsible for the murder of Mr. Belmore, he stated "we[re] equal," but went on to say that "it's really me."

Mr. Robinson told the Board that Mr. Belmore was chosen because he just happened to be by himself. When asked to describe his role in the murder, Mr. Robinson said that he beat, kicked, and punched him. He also took Mr. Belmore's wallet. He agreed that his actions contributed to Mr. Belmore's death. Mr. Robinson admitted that he was carrying a knife the night of the murder, but that only one person used a knife that night. He indicated that his sister held him back and told him not to participate, but he did. It was noted by a Board Member that on Mr. Robinson's birthday, he participated in the murder of someone who was trying to make something of himself by attending college. Mr. Robinson agreed that the crime was senseless and that Mr. Belmore "lost his life over nothing."

A Board Member asked Mr. Robinson about his lifestyle prior to the murder. He stated that his grandmother raised him after he had lived in a foster home. He stated that he was disciplined by his mother "in a harsh way." He explained that everything he did at the time was due to the anger he was dealing with. Mr. Robinson said that "at 20-years-old, I thought I knew a lot, I didn't know nothing." He had a couple children and was trying to be responsible. He had odd jobs and started selling drugs. He was also drinking and smoking weed to deal with the anger.

In describing his progress since his last hearing, Mr. Robinson stated that when he first started his job working with Adult Daily Living (ADL), he realized that it helps when someone cares. He stated that he is appreciated by the people that he helps. Mr. Robinson told the Board that he has changed from the person he used to be. He is currently enrolled in the Restorative Justice Re-entry Program and has participated in the Restorative Justice Reading Group. He added that he has not had any disciplinary reports.

The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Mr. Robinson's father, son, and daughter. The Board considered testimony in opposition to parole from Mr. Belmore's mother and two sisters. Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Charles Bartoloni spoke in opposition to parole.

III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Larry Robinson has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. There were new doubts raised as to the primary motivation for the governing offense. It is the opinion that Mr. Robinson 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. Robinson'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. Robinson's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Robinson's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Larry Robinson is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Robinson's next appearance before the Board will take place in three years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Robinson 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. 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, Executive Director/General Counsel



Date