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PAROLE BOARD

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Charlene Bonner
Chairperson

Janis DiLoreto Smith
Executive Director

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

MAURICE WILLIAMS

W33399

TYPE OF HEARING: **Revocation Review Hearing**

DATE OF HEARING: **August 12, 2014**

DATE OF DECISION: **November 20, 2014**

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tina Hurley, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Josh Wall

DECISION OF THE BOARD: After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, institutional record, the testimony of the inmate at the hearing, the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the Board, we conclude by a unanimous vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole at this time. Parole is granted to a long term residential program subject to conditions.

I.STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On December 8, 1971, a jury in the Suffolk Superior Court convicted Maurice Williams of second degree murder and unlawful carrying of a firearm. Respectively, the Court sentenced Williams to life and a concurrent sentence of two and a half to three years.

During the evening of May 21, 1970, Williams, age 21, shot and killed Leonard Castronova, age 17, in the Grove Hall section of Boston. Williams and his co-defendant, Richard Clark, attempted to sell heroin to Castronova and a companion. During the transaction, an argument ensued about payment for the drugs. As Castronova and his companion attempted to flee the location in his car, Williams fired at the car, hitting Castronova in his right shoulder, piercing his chest and lung, and perforating his aorta. Castronova died later that evening at Carney Hospital. Williams was arrested by the Boston Police on June 17, 1970.

At trial, Williams was convicted of second-degree murder and unlawfully carrying a firearm. In 1973, Williams' conviction was affirmed by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, yet his co-defendant Richard Clark's conviction was reversed on the grounds of insufficient evidence. *Commonwealth v. Richard Clark, Jr.*, 363 Mass. 467 (1973). Williams filed a motion for new trial in 1977 and a second motion for new trial in 1997, both of which failed. *Commonwealth v. Williams*, 52 Mass. App. Ct. 1113 (2001).

II. CRIMINAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND PAROLE HISTORY

Williams' criminal history includes a prior conviction for breaking and entering and a juvenile delinquency for larceny. In addition, he was convicted for a prison escape in 1975, during which Williams escaped while on furlough and was not captured for three months.

Williams is serving his first incarceration. While incarcerated, his overall adjustment includes an escape,¹ two higher returns to custody,² and more than 20 disciplinary reports. The disciplinary reports were mainly for infractions that include being out of place, being late from furlough, not calling in during a furlough, and not standing for count. His most recent disciplinary reports include his failure to go to the prison's Health Service Unit for medical appointments in 2009 and 2010. For his most recent failure to attend the appointment, Williams claimed he missed it because he did not look at the appointment sheet.

Although he has been granted four paroles, Williams has a very poor record of parole compliance, having failed every time. Generally, his violations result from domestic violence and substance abuse. Williams was released on parole in November 1986, and remained in the community until January 1989, when he was arrested for disorderly conduct. After remaining in custody for four months, Williams was re-paroled and resided in the community for approximately four years before his parole was revoked for a new arrest for shoplifting, assault and battery on his wife, threatening his wife, and motor vehicle violations. These charges were later disposed of via dismissals.

Williams remained in custody until January 2000, when he was paroled for a third time and sent to the New England Aftercare Ministries program, a long term residential treatment program. Williams' parole, however, was revoked for a third time on June 1, 2004, when he admitted to using cocaine and drinking alcohol. On November 15, 2004, he was paroled for a fourth time to a long term residential program and remained under community supervision until July 17, 2005 when he was returned to custody after being arraigned in Brockton District Court for an assault and battery on his wife. These charges were dismissed.

¹ His escape occurred in March of 1975, resulting in a related charge and ultimately a concurrent sentence of one year to one year and a day by the Suffolk Superior Court in May 1976. This sentence has since expired.

² Department of Correction classification records provide that Williams' first return to higher custody was the result of his charge of escape when he failed to return from furlough in March 1975. His second return to higher custody occurred in July 1982, when Williams was transferred to MCI-Norfolk, following an investigation that he sexually assaulted a patient while at the Medfield Prison Project. The charges of kidnapping and rape were *Nolle Prosequi* in January 1994.

III. PAROLE HEARING ON AUGUST 12, 2014

Following his return to custody in 2005, Williams went before the Parole Board in 2011 for a re-parole hearing and was denied with a review in three years. In its decision, the Parole Board encouraged him to invest in rehabilitation and to focus on his role in his parole failures.

Williams is now 66 years old and is vision impaired. Williams requested his sister to read his opening statement which focused on his insight as to why he has failed on parole and how he intends to succeed in the community. During questioning, Williams emphasized how he has placed the blame for his arrests, failures, and substance use on other people. Williams stated he is finally able to recognize how he is responsible for being in unhealthy relationships, separating himself from his support system, and resorting to drug and alcohol use to relieve his stressors. Williams invested in programming that he states allowed him to have a different perspective. He stated that Correctional Recovery Academy was particularly helpful and, after completing the program, he stayed on as a graduate mentor. He is responsible for mentoring three younger inmates in who he could see "the old me versus the new me." Williams acknowledged that it has taken him a very long time to reach his current stage of rehabilitation. Williams is nine years sober and largely credits his programming to his continued success.

Williams also reconnected with his support system and stated that his siblings have been very supportive throughout his life and, as long as he is living a sober and productive life, they continue to provide unconditional support. Williams developed a skill in furniture making and upholstery. He has increased his skill set into designing furniture and hopes to try and utilize his skills in the community.

Williams would like to be paroled to a long term residential treatment program to continue his success in a treatment environment. He then plans to utilize his support system and employment skills to live eventually on an independent basis while under parole supervision.

Williams has strong family support. He is one of eight siblings in a close knit family. Two of Williams' siblings spoke at the hearing and expressed their knowledge of Williams' past issues, struggles with addiction, and how they would be prepared to support him. Williams also had letters of support from other family members, including his mother. Also speaking in support of Williams' parole was Leonard Lacey, who has a 50-year relationship with Williams, and states he will be able to assist Williams with his re-entry needs.

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office submitted a letter recognizing Williams' progress and investment in rehabilitation. If paroled, the District Attorney would urge the Parole Board to set conditions that would require ongoing treatment for addictions.

IV. DECISION

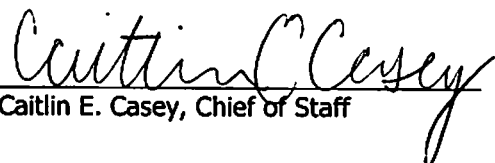
Williams was returned to custody in 2005 after four prior revocations of his parole. Williams has worked hard to address the precipitants that have led to his prior relapses and difficulties with adjusting in the community. Williams presented as having gained insight and skills from his investment in his rehabilitation. Williams also has a strong support system that will assist him with a positive re-entry. Given his progress in his rehabilitation, family members

are willing and able to provide him with emotional and financial support as he re-enters the community.

The standard for parole is set out in 120 C.M.R. 300.04, which provides that "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such an 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." Applying that appropriately high standard, it is the unanimous decision of the Parole Board that Williams is suitable for parole. Williams will be paroled to a long term residential treatment program and in accordance with the conditions set forth below.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Re-parole to a long term residential program; supervise for drugs with testing required; supervise for liquor abstinence with testing required; report to parole office on day of release; per Mr. Williams' request, AA or NA at least six times per week; counseling for adjustment issues and substance abuse after completion of long term residential program.

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.


Caitlin E. Casey, Chief of Staff

11/20/14
Date