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Tina M. Hurley
Chair

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Acting Executive Director

RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

MICHAEL COLLINS

W94599

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: March 23, 2023

DATE OF DECISION: June 6, 2023

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

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On June 16, 2009, after a jury trial in Suffolk Superior Court, Michael Collins was convicted of second-degree murder in the shooting death of Myles Lawton and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, Mr. Collins was convicted of armed assault with intent to murder and unlawful possession of a firearm. He received concurrent sentences of fifteen to twenty years and four to five years in state prison, respectively.

Mr. Collins appeared before the Parole Board for an initial hearing on March 23, 2023. He was represented by Attorney John Rull. The entire video recording of Mr. Collins' March 23, 2023, 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 opinion that Michael Collins has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Collins committed the shooting murder of Myles Lawton of December 5, 2006. He also shot another victim, who suffered severe injuries. Mr. Collins has had a very poor institutional adjustment with forty-two sanctioned disciplinary reports with twenty-eight SMU placements, one DDU placement,

two SAU placements, and four transfers to higher custody. The infractions have been incredibly serious, involving violence and drugs. The Board needs Mr. Collins to establish a significant period of incident-free behavior. Mr. Collins also needs to commit to his sobriety and obtain employment. The Board notes he has participated in some training programs. He needs to invest in his self-development and rehabilitation by addressing conflict resolution, anger management, victim empathy, and violence reduction. The Board notes Mr. Collins has a strong support network.

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

Mr. Collins' next appearance before the Board will take place in three¹ years 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.


Tina M. Hurley, Chair

6/6/23
Date

¹ Four Board members voted to deny parole with a review in three years and two Board members voted to deny parole with a review in four years.