



**Charles D. Baker**  
Governor

**Karyn Polito**  
Lieutenant Governor

**Daniel Bennett**  
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*



**Paul M. Treseler**  
Chairman

**Michael J. Callahan**  
Executive Director

**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**  
**MICHAEL MONTEL**  
**W51627**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing  
**DATE OF HEARING:** February 7, 2017  
**DATE OF DECISION:** August 15, 2017

**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 five years from the date of the hearing.

**I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

On December 11, 1991, in Hampden Superior Court, Michael Montel pled guilty to the second degree murder of his estranged wife, 29-year-old Marianne Rose Montel. Mr. Montel was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.

Six weeks prior to the murder, Mr. Montel (then 29-years-old) and Ms. Montel had separated due to his violent behavior, which included threatening to kill her, physically assaulting her, and choking her. On April 17, 1991, however, Mr. Montel broke into Ms. Montel's apartment, assaulted her with two knives, and forced her to remain in her bedroom. Their children were in the apartment during these events. The next day, Ms. Montel took the children and went to stay at a friend's house. On April 19, 1991, Ms. Montel was on her way to drop off the children at school, when she stopped at her apartment to pick up her son's knapsack. Mr. Montel was not supposed to be there. When Ms. Montel and the children arrived at the house, she told her son to get the knapsack, while she used the bathroom. Mr. Montel entered through the back door and instructed his son to go wait in the car. Mr. Montel then proceeded to the bathroom and fatally stabbed Ms. Montel with a fishing knife. After the



murder, Mr. Montel went to the car, told the children that their mother was not feeling well, and dropped them off at school. Later that morning, Mr. Montel went to the Springfield Police Department and told police that he thought he had killed his wife.

## **II. PAROLE HEARING ON FEBRUARY 7, 2017**

Michael Montel, now 55-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on February 7, 2017. Mr. Montel was represented by Northeastern University Student Attorney Sarah Watson. His initial hearing in 2006 resulted in the denial of parole. Mr. Montel was also denied parole after review hearings in 2009 and 2012. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Montel said that he was sorry for the murder of Ms. Montel and the "pain and violence" that he caused in their relationship. Mr. Montel expressed his remorse and took responsibility for "everything" he has done. He deeply regrets that Ms. Montel could not share her life with her family, children, and friends, and that they could not share their lives with her.

Mr. Montel was asked to discuss his relationship with Ms. Montel. After meeting in 1982, he believes that he became mentally and physically abusive within the first six months of their relationship. The first act of physical violence occurred when he threw a paring knife at Ms. Montel, while they were preparing a meal at her grandmother's home. A Board Member pointed out that Mr. Montel could have killed Ms. Montel. Mr. Montel replied, "Absolutely, and I realize the severity of what I did." Mr. Montel later claimed that he was not intentionally trying to hit Ms. Montel with the knife, but that he threw it in her direction and should have known it could have hit her or one of her sisters. A Board Member asked Mr. Montel how many other acts of violence took place during the relationship. Mr. Montel replied, "...For physical violence...there's only five that I can think of offhand." Mr. Montel clarified that this total did not include the murder, but included the incident with the paring knife. He described other occasions when he punched her on the chin, threw her against a wall, and choked her. When asked if he had threatened to kill her, Mr. Montel said "I might have, I might have... that was a phrase I used to a lot of people." Mr. Montel said that he no longer uses that phrase.

About six weeks prior to the murder, Mr. Montel explained that he and Ms. Montel had separated. Mr. Montel got his own apartment after a marriage counselor suggested they get separate residences. He and Ms. Montel came to an agreement where he would stay with her and the children during the week, and then go to his apartment on the weekends. When asked if Ms. Montel was afraid of him, Mr. Montel said, "Yes," acknowledging that she "absolutely" had a right to be afraid of him. Two days before the murder, Mr. Montel showed up at the restaurant where Ms. Montel worked. Ms. Montel declined to join him, but Mr. Montel remained at the restaurant and subsequently saw Ms. Montel kiss another man, which "enraged" him. An argument ensued, and Mr. Montel ended up leaving the restaurant. Mr. Montel, however, showed up at Ms. Montel's home later that night. Mr. Montel said that he now knows he should not have done so and admitted that Ms. Montel did not want him there. The children (then ages 7, 4, and 1) were also in the home at that time. Mr. Montel proceeded to break into the bedroom and attacked Ms. Montel with one of the two knives that he had used to get into the bedroom. Mr. Montel said that he cut Ms. Montel on the forearm, pushed her onto the bed, and held her in the room against her will for the night. When Mr. Montel woke up, Ms. Montel was getting ready to go to work, he believed, as if nothing had happened. Asked what he thinks of that today, Mr. Montel stated, "... That's some immense fear, that's what I think of it."



On the day of the murder, Mr. Montel said that he took a cab to Ms. Montel's house. When he arrived at the home, he saw her car in the driveway and entered the house. He encountered Ms. Montel and his oldest son. The other two children were in Ms. Montel's car. Mr. Montel told his son to go to the car and watch his siblings. He then grabbed a knife and went around the house looking to see if the other man was there, as well. When Mr. Montel saw that the other man was not in the house, he proceeded to the bathroom to "address" Ms. Montel. A Board Member noted that Mr. Montel could have killed Ms. Montel two nights prior, and asked Mr. Montel why he decided to kill Ms. Montel that day. In response, Mr. Montel said that he and Ms. Montel "had words" and she told him that the other man would make a better father than him. Mr. Montel stated, "That kinda hurt me... and...as that was happening, she stood up and I took that as her defying me." Mr. Montel then attacked Ms. Montel with the knife. When a Board Member asked Mr. Montel if, at any point, he thought of the three children in the car, he said, "No." Mr. Montel told the children their mother was sick and then took them to school.

Mr. Montel was asked what he thinks now, over 20 years later, of the brutal set of events that he just shared with the Board. Mr. Montel replied, "I wish I could remove myself from that. Because that's not who I am and that's not who I want to be." Mr. Montel stated that he has dealt with his "traumas" and "triggers of abandonment" and has addressed his "low self-esteem." During his incarceration, Mr. Montel participated in programming to include: Alternatives to Violence, Restorative Justice, Emotional Awareness/Emotional Healing, the End Violence Project, Active Listening, and a domestic violence course, among others. Mr. Montel is currently employed as a machinist for MassCor.

Mr. Montel's mother, father, and two of his friends spoke in support of parole. The Board also received letters in support of parole. The victim's sister spoke in opposition to parole. A Victim Services Unit Representative read three statements, at the request of Ms. Montel's family, in opposition to parole. Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Howard Safford attempted to attend the hearing, but was precluded from doing so due to inclement weather. ADA Safford submitted a letter to the Board.

### **III. DECISION**


The Board is of the opinion that Michael Montel has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. The Board believes that a longer period of positive institutional adjustment and programming would be beneficial to Mr. Montel's rehabilitation. Mr. Montel continues to exhibit that he is not rehabilitated and that he lacks insight as to his criminal conduct.

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. Montel'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. Montel's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Montel's

case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Mr. Montel is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Montel's next appearance before the Board will take place in five years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Montel 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.*

  
Gioriann Moroney, General Counsel

  
Date