



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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Paul M. Treseler
Chairman

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

NATHANIEL WILLIAMS

W34781

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: October 3, 2017

DATE OF DECISION: August 9, 2018

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Chairman Paul M. Treseler - recused¹

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 December 2, 1974, in Suffolk Superior Court, Nathaniel Williams pleaded guilty to one count of second-degree murder in the shooting death of Boston Police Detective John Schroeder. Mr. Williams also pleaded guilty to four counts of armed robbery. He was sentenced to serve 5 concurrent terms of life in prison with the possibility of parole.

On November 30, 1973, Anthony Irving, Terrell Walker, and 20-year-old Nathaniel Williams planned to rob the Suffolk Loan Company, a pawn shop, on Washington Street in Roxbury. The three armed men entered the store, where there were a number of customers and store personnel present. Upon seeing Detective John Schroeder, either Mr. Williams or Mr. Irving recognized him to be a police officer and yelled out "he is a cop, get him." Mr. Walker, armed

¹ Chairman Paul M. Treseler - recused

with a gun, struggled with Detective Schroeder. He struck him over the head with his gun, and then shot him once in the neck. After Detective Schroeder (55-years-old) fell to the ground fatally wounded, the three men ordered store employees to unlock the safe and open display cases. They robbed the store of watches, rings, cash, and other valuables. Before leaving, Mr. Walker pulled a badge holder and money from the body of Detective Schroeder. He also removed Detective Schroeder's gun, a .38 caliber revolver, and kept it. The three men then fled the store.

Terrell Walker was arrested later that day in a Boston apartment, where Detective Schroeder's gun was also found. Mr. Irving and Mr. Williams were arrested the following day, December 1, 1973, on a bus in Danville, Virginia. The gun used to shoot Detective Schroeder was found in Mr. Williams' bag.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON OCTOBER 3, 2017

Nathaniel Williams, now 64-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on October 3, 2017. He was represented by Attorney Michael Phelan. Mr. Williams had requested a postponement of his initial parole eligibility in 1988. He later appeared before the Board in 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, and 1999. He was denied parole each time. Mr. Williams was granted parole after his review hearing in 2000. In 2006, however, Mr. Williams was arrested for assault and battery, and his parole was revoked. The case was later dismissed without prejudice. Parole was denied after his 2007 review hearing. Mr. Williams was then paroled after his February 9, 2010 review hearing. On July 20, 2011, parole was revoked after Mr. Williams was found with crack cocaine. He was denied parole after his revocation review hearing on January 24, 2012. Mr. Williams was then paroled after his review hearing on February 12, 2015, but, in December 2016, he was arrested for operating under the influence of intoxicating liquor (OUI). On March 17, 2017, revocation was affirmed.

Mr. Williams acknowledged to the Board that he has been paroled three times in the past. Regarding his recent return to custody, he stated, "I feel bad, I feel messed up, you know, I did a stupid thing." He explained that he was living with his sister, when he received a call from his doctor regarding bypass surgery. He panicked, as he was stressed about his housing situation. On December 22, 2016, he went to his daughter's house to give money for his granddaughter's birthday. He explained that his intention was to leave, but when he got there, he observed alcoholic drinks. He stated that he had a drink of vodka and two beers, as he was trying to "mask [his] pain...." He said that his plan was to go back to his sister's house, but she was not at home. So, he had to drive to Randolph to get a key to the house. Police were waiting for him in Randolph, however, having received a call about an erratic driver. A Board Member noted that Mr. Williams was arrested and charged with OUI, and that he put public safety at risk when he got behind the wheel after drinking alcohol.

Regarding the murder of Detective John Schroeder, Mr. Williams explained that he grew up with his co-defendants and that he was not working at the time. He acknowledged that they were all armed on the day of the murder, and that he was "drug sick" from heroin. Mr. Williams said that their motive was to rob the pawn shop and then sell the items to possibly purchase drugs. He told the Board that his role was to guard the door. He said that they all went into the store, but he ran outside when he heard a shot. Mr. Williams denied knowing that the victim was a Boston police detective.

Mr. Williams said that he has four children, two sons and two daughters. Mr. Williams stated, "I do know that I messed up." In referencing a place to live and his health issues, he said, "I know that I have to find a better way to deal with my crisis." Mr. Williams explained that he is a diabetic and has had a heart attack. He acknowledged that he suffers from anxiety and depression, but denies taking medication. He stated that his drug of choice was heroin and alcohol. Since his return to custody, Mr. Williams stated that he works in the kitchen and participates in the Graduate Maintenance Program and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). He has not obtained his G.E.D. If paroled, he would prefer to attend a long term residential program at Askia Academy, along with the use of Vivitrol. He would then like to live with his girlfriend. The Board, however, questioned Mr. Williams about criminal charges that arose out of an incident with his girlfriend in 2006, although it was noted that the charge was dismissed. When a Board Member asked Mr. Williams why he should be paroled again, he replied, "I need some help." A Board Member expressed concern that Mr. Williams did not adequately reach out for help from his support network when issues arose on his prior parole. Mr. Williams' agreed, stating, "I think you are right." He claimed that this time, if paroled, he would be asking for help.

The Board considered testimony in opposition to parole from Detective Kevin Pumphret on behalf of the Boston Police Department. Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Charles Bartoloni spoke in opposition to parole.

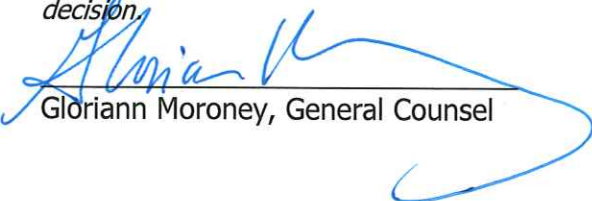
III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Williams has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Williams has had multiple parole failures and lacks motivation to succeed. During his opportunities on parole, he has not utilized his support network. Mr. Williams should continue to address his causative factors.

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

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

8/9/18
Date