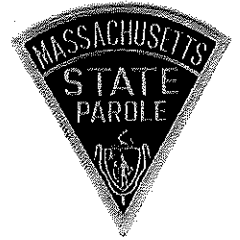


The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



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**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**PAUL LECLAIR**

**W81563**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** November 7, 2017

**DATE OF DECISION:** October 18, 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 five years from the date of the hearing.

**I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

Following a jury trial, in Worcester Superior Court, on March 19, 2003, Paul LeClair was convicted of the second degree murder of his wife Pamela LeClair and received a life sentence with the possibility of parole. On direct appellate review, the Supreme Judicial Court upheld the conviction.<sup>1</sup>

On January 4, 1998, sometime around noon, Pamela LeClair called Charlton police to report that her husband Paul LeClair (age 41) was threatening to kill her. When police arrived at the LeClair home, they found Mr. LeClair with a gun to his head, kneeling over the bleeding body of his wife. The officer's persuaded Mr. LeClair to drop the gun, and he was placed under arrest.

<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth v. Paul LeClair, 445 Mass. 734 (2006)

When one of the officers asked what had happened, Mr. LeClair described a brief argument that escalated to the point where he stabbed his wife in the shoulder. Ms. LeClair was taken to the hospital, but died later that day.

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

Paul LeClair, now 60-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on November 7, 2017. He was represented by Northeastern University School of Law Student Attorneys Caroline Moy and Michael Roderick. Mr. LeClair had been denied parole after his initial hearing in 2012. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. LeClair apologized to Ms. LeClair's family and expressed his remorse for killing her. Board Members questioned Mr. LeClair about his thoughts of his 2012 parole hearing. Mr. LeClair responded that the hearing was eye-opening and, after reflecting on what was said, he realized that he was abusive to his wife. When the Board asked him why it took him over 14 years to realize this, Mr. LeClair said it took him a long time to understand that being overly suspicious of his wife, as well as disparaging and isolating her, were also components of domestic abuse. In response to questioning by the Board, Mr. LeClair said that his mother was cold and controlling and told him that he was a "mistake." He added that his upbringing contributed to jealousy and suspicion in his relationships.

The Board questioned Mr. LeClair about his relationship with his wife leading up to the murder. Mr. LeClair said that their marriage had become strained, and that their arguments had increased. Mr. LeClair also said that he yelled at his wife and made jokes at her expense to the neighbors. When he asked Ms. LeClair to move out, she did so on Christmas Day 1997. Ms. LeClair still came to the house, however, to mind their two children while Mr. LeClair was at work. When a Board Member asked Mr. LeClair what it says about his relationship that his wife moved out on Christmas Day, without her children, he admitted that it showed she was afraid of him.

On January 4, 1998, Mr. LeClair said his wife and her brother came to the house. When Ms. LeClair said that she was leaving him and taking the kids, as well as getting a restraining order, Mr. LeClair said he tried to coerce her into staying. He blamed Ms. LeClair's brother for her leaving him and told her brother to get off his property. He said he swung at his brother-in-law, and a fight ensued. At some point during the fight, Mr. LeClair said he ran into the kitchen and grabbed a knife. After his wife called police, he stabbed her in the shoulder area. Ms. LeClair's brother then tried to hit him with a chair. Mr. LeClair held the knife to his wife, backed up to his bedroom, and retrieved his revolver. When he produced the gun, her brother left and, shortly after, police arrived. When the Board asked why he stabbed her, Mr. LeClair said that he had issued an ultimatum and, when the ultimatum was not met, he exploded in rage. A Board Member questioned Mr. LeClair as to whether he was aware that Ms. LeClair's two sons had witnessed their mother's murder. Mr. LeClair claims he did not know they were there, and that he cannot imagine the trauma he caused them.

Mr. LeClair spoke of his involvement with programs that address domestic violence, including Emotional Awareness, Domestic Violence Days, and Restorative Justice. Mr. LeClair said he is currently participates in a new re-entry Restorative Justice program. When the Board asked if the domestic violence classes were one-day workshops or ongoing programs, Mr. LeClair said they were one-day workshops. Mr. LeClair's attorney told the Board that Mr. LeClair hopes to be released to the Soldier On program and would find a certified batterer's intervention program to

help with his domestic violence issues. Mr. LeClair hopes to find a job in the telecommunications field again, if released.

Mr. LeClair's friend testified in support of parole and a family member sent a letter in support of his parole. Ms. LeClair's brother, sister and two sons testified in opposition to his release. In addition, Worcester County Assistant District Attorney Michelle King testified in opposition to parole.

### **III. DECISION**

The Board is of the unanimous opinion that Paul LeClair has not yet demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. It is evident that Mr. LeClair has yet to fully come to terms with his criminal culpability. Mr. LeClair showed a complete lack empathy. He just recently stopped blaming the victim and has just recently engaged in rehabilitation.

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

Mr. LeClair'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. LeClair 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

10/18/18  
Date