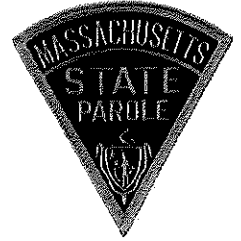


*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*



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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

**PAUL SOLOMONSEN
W58895**

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: December 5, 2023

DATE OF DECISION: May 8, 2024

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in 2 years from the date of the hearing.¹

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On June 29, 1995, in Bristol County Superior Court, a jury found Paul Solomonsen guilty of second-degree murder in the death of Jeffrey Rosanina, as well as carrying a firearm. Mr. Solomonsen was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole for the murder and received a concurrent 4 to 5-year sentence for the firearm offense.

Parole was denied following an initial hearing in 2009. Mr. Solomonsen was eligible for review hearings in 2013 and 2018, but elected to postpone them. On December 5, 2023, Mr. Solomonsen appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing. He was represented by student attorneys Alejandra Bandler and Vincent Palladino, who were supervised by Attorney Patricia Garin of Northeastern University School of Law. The Board's decision fully incorporates, by reference, the entire video recording of Paul Solomonsen's December 5, 2023 hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On April 28, 1994, Mr. Solomonsen awoke around 11:00 a.m. and consumed beer, cocaine, and a prescription medication. He continued to consume drugs and alcohol throughout the day. He then went to the Shark Club in New Bedford with a friend. They soon ran out of money and left in search of additional funds. The pair returned a short while later armed with three handguns and money. As closing time approached, Mr. Solomonsen and his friend, along with the other club patrons, began to leave. Outside, Mr. Solomonsen had words

¹ Two Board members voted to grant parole to a Long-Term Residential Program.

with Thomas Branquino (with whom he had tussled earlier in the evening), the bar manager, and some of the bouncers. He then produced and brandished a handgun and invited Mr. Branquino to “[expletive] with [him] now.” The situation was defused and Mr. Solomonsen went across the street with his friend.

Jeffrey Rosanina, not previously involved in the conflict, left the Shark Club and walked toward the car. When Mr. Rosanina reached the car, Mr. Solomonsen was seated in the passenger seat with the passenger side door open. Mr. Rosanina walked up to Mr. Solomonsen, leaned his right elbow on the car's roof, and appeared to converse with Mr. Solomonsen. Others, including Mr. Rosanina's brother, set off after him, but, before they reached the car, two shots rang out: one bullet struck Mr. Rosanina in the chest and the other struck him in the head.

APPLICABLE STANDARD: Parole “[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society.” M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. In making this determination, the Board takes into consideration an incarcerated individual’s institutional behavior, their participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of incarceration, and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize the incarcerated individual’s risk of recidivism. M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. The Board also considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the incarcerated individual at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the incarcerated individual’s testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing and/or in written submissions to the Board (if applicable).

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Solomonsen appeared before the Board and requested time to complete the Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP). The Board notes that Mr. Solomonsen has made positive strides during his period of incarceration. He has been employed since November 2021. He was attending the SOTP and was meeting various goals at the program. Mr. Solomonsen has indicated to the Board that completing the SOTP would be beneficial to him and his rehabilitation. While he previously entered the SOTP, he stated he was unable to finish the program due to symptoms associated with his anxiety disorder and his mother’s declining health. The Board notes that if Mr. Solomonsen is again unable to complete the SOTP, or if he successfully completes the program, the Board encourages him and his counsel to petition for reconsideration of this denial regardless of the Board’s reconsideration timeframes. Bristol County Assistant District Attorney Russell Eonas opposed parole. Various family and friends testified in support of granting parole.

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.


Tina M. Hurley, Chair


Date