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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

RONALD DEWOLFE
W37388

(Aka MUHAMMAD MAHDI¹)

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 3, 2016

DATE OF DECISION: November 7, 2016

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Paul M. Treseler, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Ina Howard-Hogan, 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 the 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 3, 1979, Ronald DeWolfe was convicted of rape of a child and assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon by a Plymouth County jury. He was sentenced to a term of life imprisonment for rape of a child and to a concurrent term of four to five years for assault by means of a deadly weapon. On April 23, 1985 in the Norfolk Superior Court, Mr. DeWolfe was convicted of assault to rape and assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon. He was sentenced to a term of 10 to 15 years in state prison for the charge of assault to rape and 9-10 years for assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon, both to be served concurrent with the life sentence. On March 31, 1988 in the Plymouth Superior Court,

¹ Muhammad Mahdi, previously known as Ronald DeWolfe, changed his name while incarcerated.

Mr. DeWolfe was declared a sexually dangerous person. He was sentenced to civil commitment of 1 day to life imprisonment.

On June 24, 1978, a 13-year-old female (the victim) and her friend performed a variety of household chores for Mr. DeWolfe and then left in the late afternoon. (The victim's friend lived next door to Mr. DeWolfe.) Early that evening, Mr. DeWolfe phoned the 13-year-old female and asked her to return to his apartment to do some additional chores. When she arrived, Mr. DeWolfe let her in and then pretended to talk to his wife, who was supposedly in the bathroom. After finishing the chores and about to leave, the girl was asked by Mr. DeWolfe to take trash out of a bedroom closet. Mr. DeWolfe, however, followed her to the bedroom, and then pushed her onto the bed. Brandishing a knife, he threatened to kill her and forced her to undress. He then took her to the bathroom to show her that his wife was not present. Mr. DeWolfe led the victim back to the bedroom and (despite the young girl crying and resisting the attack) forcibly raped her.

After the rape, the victim fled and went to her friend's house next door. When the police arrived, the victim gave an account of the incident. She was then taken to a hospital, where mobile sperm were detected in the victim's vagina. A search of Mr. DeWolfe's apartment revealed him to be under a bed (with his eyes closed) and intoxicated. He was carried out of the apartment and taken to a hospital. The police also discovered the knife used by Mr. DeWolfe in the rape.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 3, 2016

Ronald DeWolfe, now 74-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board on May 3, 2016, for a review hearing and was represented by Attorney John Day. Mr. DeWolfe was previously denied parole in 1993, 2006, and 2012. Mr. DeWolfe waived his hearing in 1996 and postponed his hearing in 2001. He is currently incarcerated at the Massachusetts Treatment Center.

At this hearing, Mr. DeWolfe admitted that he committed horrendous crimes and stated that he takes full responsibility. He said that he committed several sex crimes over a span of 12 years and that the crimes were not the fault of the victims. He stated that he had been charged with committing three rapes and one attempted rape (he said the attempted rape was a "drug deal gone bad" and that the case was dismissed). Mr. DeWolfe stated that in all three rapes, the victims begged him to stop and thought they were going to die. He said that he didn't care about the victims' fears, as long as he got what he wanted. Mr. DeWolfe declared that he had been under the influence of drugs (barbiturates and cocaine) and alcohol when he committed each of his crimes.

Mr. DeWolfe said that early in his incarceration, he had denied the sexual assaults and maintained his innocence. In the mid-2000's, however, he started telling the truth. He admitted that he had a wanton disregard for the safety of others. He stated that "no one cared about me, so why should I care about anyone else" and that he was civilly committed as a Sexually Dangerous Person in June 1988. Mr. DeWolfe admitted that he targeted the women whom he sexually assaulted. He said that his strategy was to lure them to an area under false pretenses and then rape them. Mr. DeWolfe told the Board that he caused his victims to be "...in fear of their lives" and stated that he had damaged them greatly. In describing his troubled childhood, Mr. DeWolfe told the Board that his father drank a lot and beat his mother.

He said that his mother's friend had sex with him when he was 14-years-old. He also said that when he was a child, his sister had scarlet fever and he was placed in quarantine. He was put in the garage to play alone, making him feel unwanted.

Upon questioning from the Board regarding the result of his last parole hearing, Mr. DeWolfe said that he was devastated, but realized he had not used most of the services offered to him. Mr. DeWolfe told the Board that he currently sees a mental health clinician once a month for depression. He said that he attends AA/NA two times a week and had attended classes on victim empathy. He also said that he goes to house meetings and attends two treatment groups per week. Mr. DeWolfe told the Board that CAB (Community Access Board) requested he look at the sadistic nature of his offenses. He said that CAB stated he has aspects of negative emotionality, as well as a lack of concern for others. Mr. DeWolfe said he wants to work on those aspects because he realizes that they are always present. Mr. DeWolfe also stated that he "will have to work on issues for the rest of his life. Whether on the inside or the outside, I will still have to work on it. I will still have to stay involved in treatment and Alcoholic Anonymous and drug treatment." He estimated that he will be in a better place (in terms of rehabilitation and treatment) in three to four years.

The Board questioned Mr. DeWolfe about a disciplinary report he received in 2014. He said that he was placed in MPU (Minimum Privilege Unit) and was suspended from treatment. He said he realized that he had to change his ways, if he ever hoped to be released. The Board commented that Mr. DeWolfe had been given parole opportunities in the past. Mr. DeWolfe admitted that he violated his prior paroles by committing new offenses. He further admitted that during a prior parole, he attempted to murder his neighbor. Mr. DeWolfe, however, told the Board that he is not currently a risk to public safety because he looks at things differently now. Mr. DeWolfe said that, previously, he didn't think he had to follow the rules, but that he has now changed. He stated that if paroled to his civil commitment, he would be given an opportunity to practice the progress he has made. He would like to be paroled to his civil commitment at the Community Transition House in the Treatment Center. Mr. DeWolfe also told the Board that he is married (for the third time). His wife lives in New York, however, and does not visit. He has two children with whom he has no contact and a sister with whom he last had contact in 1991. Mr. DeWolfe said that, if released, his support in the community would be ex-inmates who were at the Treatment Center with him, as well as a chaplain.

There was no testimony in support of Mr. DeWolfe's parole. Plymouth County Assistant District Attorney Stacey Gauthier testified in opposition to parole.

III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. DeWolfe has not yet 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 rehabilitative adjustment and programming would be beneficial to Mr. DeWolfe's 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. DeWolfe'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. DeWolfe's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. DeWolfe's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Mr. DeWolfe is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Dewolfe'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. DeWolfe 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

11/7/16
Date