



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

SHAKIR ABDULLAH

F/K/A

DENNIS SHELTON

W51043

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: October 22, 2019

DATE OF DECISION: March 26, 2020

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Gloriann Moroney, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Karen McCarthy, Colette Santa

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On August 14, 1991, in Worcester County Superior Court, a jury found Shakir Abdullah (formerly known as Dennis Shelton) guilty of second-degree murder for the shooting death of Greg White. Accordingly, he was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole. On August 21, 1991, Shakir Abdullah was also found guilty of assault to rob and assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon on a female victim. He was sentenced to 6-10 years to run concurrent with his life sentence.

Mr. Abdullah appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on October 22, 2019 and was represented by Northeastern University Law School Students Emma Benjamin and Rose Woodbury. This was Mr. Abdullah's fourth appearance before the Board, having been denied parole in 2005, 2010 and 2017. Mr. Abdullah had postponed his 2015 hearing. The entire video recording of Mr. Abdullah's October 22, 2019 hearing is fully incorporated by reference to the Board's decision.

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 that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole. Reserve to CRJ Transitional Housing, but not before 12 months

in lower security.¹ He has served 29 years for the murder of Greg White. It is the opinion of the Board that he has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would not make his release incompatible with the welfare of society.

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. Abdullah'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. Abdullah's risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Mr. Abdullah's case, the Board is of the opinion that Mr. Abdullah is rehabilitated and merits parole at this time.

Special Conditions: Reserve to CRJ Transitional Housing minimum 6 months, but not before 12 months in lower security; Waive work for 2 weeks; Must be at home between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. at PO discretion; ELMO-electronic monitoring at PO discretion; Supervise for drugs; testing in accordance with agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence; testing in accordance with agency policy; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; No contact with victim(s); Must have substance abuse evaluation and adhere to plan; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment/transition; Must attend AA/NA at least 3 times per week.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The above decision is an abbreviated administrative decision issued in an effort to render an expedited resolution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Abdullah, through counsel, has waived his right to a full administrative decision.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing.



Pamela Murphy, General Counsel


Date

¹ One board member voted to deny parole with a two-year review and six board members voted to reserve to CRJ transitional Housing after 12 months in lower security.