



Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn Polito
Lieutenant Governor

Daniel Bennett
Secretary

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

12 Mercer Road
Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Telephone # (508) 650-4500
Facsimile # (508) 650-4599



Paul M. Treseler
Chairman

DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

STEPHEN DAVID

W52348

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: October 31, 2017

DATE OF DECISION: September 25, 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 a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is reserved to a long term residential program upon completion of 12 months in lower security and subject to special conditions.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On April 13, 1992, in Norfolk Superior Court, Stephen David pleaded guilty to second degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole for the kidnapping and murder of Abraham Champlain.

On October 1, 1990, Stephen David (age 30), Stephen Rose, and their girlfriends, joined Abraham Champlain (a Vietnam veteran who had lost his job) and Scott Royal, who were camping in a heavily wooded area of Faxon Park in Quincy. They began drinking into the early evening hours. An argument ensued between Mr. Champlain and Mr. Royal, whereby Mr. Rose announced that they would hold a "kangaroo court" to settle the dispute. Mr. Rose, Mr. David, and Mr. Royal found Mr. Champlain "guilty" and "sentenced" him to hang. Mr. Rose and Mr. David took Mr. Champlain to a nearby tree, tied a rope around his ankles, and hung him upside down off a

branch, while Mr. David threw rocks at him. Mr. Champlain was eventually cut down. Later in the evening the men attempted to throw Mr. Champlain into the campfire.

The next morning, the group resumed drinking. At some point in the afternoon, Mr. Rose ordered Mr. Champlain to strip naked and forced him to put on women's pajamas. The group ridiculed Mr. Champlain, threw food at him, and poured cans of tomato sauce and garlic on him. Mr. David and the other men then dragged Mr. Champlain to a second tree and, again, hung him by his ankles. At that point, Mr. David and Mr. Royal urinated on Mr. Champlain. Eventually, Mr. Champlain was cut down, dragged by the ankles, and thrown off a 36 foot high cliff, where he landed in a tree. Mr. David used the rope to drag Mr. Champlain down the rest of the cliff and then tied him to a third tree, striking him numerous times with a tree branch. Mr. David left Mr. Champlain tied to the tree and returned to the campsite. Mr. Rose eventually cut down Mr. Champlain and left a blanket for him. Soon after this incident, Mr. David fled to Tennessee.

On October 17, 1990, Quincy police found the decomposing body of Mr. Champlain in Faxon Park. An autopsy revealed that he suffered facial fractures, broken ribs, and a compound fracture of his leg. He suffered multiple traumas by a blunt instrument. On or about December 1, 1990, Mr. David was arrested in Nashville, Tennessee.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON October 31, 2017

Stephen David, now 57 years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on October 31, 2017. He was represented by Northeastern Law School Student Attorneys Devan Braun and Annie Vozar. Mr. David was denied parole after his initial hearing in 2005, as well as after his review hearings in 2010 and 2014. In Mr. David's opening statement, he apologized to the Champlain family and expressed his remorse for murdering Mr. Champlain. Mr. David told the Board that he is a recovering alcoholic, having started drinking at the age of 10. Mr. David said that he had a learning disability and lost his eye as a young teen, which contributed to his drinking problem. Board Members questioned Mr. David as to why he believed he was last denied parole. He said that the Board believed he had not taken responsibility for his actions, and that he needed one on one counseling. Mr. David stated that he could not get one on one counseling in MCI-Norfolk, where he was housed. He told the Board that he has since become involved in the Restorative Justice program and has worked at the prison on his issues of shame and guilt.

The Board noted that Mr. David was denied parole in the past for minimizing his culpability in the murder. When the Board asked Mr. David as to when he first admitted to murdering Mr. Champlain, Mr. David said, "I believe sitting in this room." Mr. David said that the pain from the loss of his eye, his learning disabilities, and for not being a good father was taken out on Mr. Champlain. Mr. David said that, initially, he and Mr. Rose intended to rob Mr. Champlain, but that it escalated from there. Mr. David said that while he admitted to himself that he murdered Mr. Champlain, it took him a long time to admit it to others. He was ashamed of what he had done to Mr. Champlain, how he had hurt both the Champlain family and his own family, and how he had hurt everyone he had come into contact with at that time in his life.

The Board questioned Mr. David as to how he has dealt with his emotional issues. Mr. David said that from 2002 until 2013, he worked with a one-on-one counselor until she retired. Mr. David said that he also talks about his problems at Church and in Restorative Justice, Emotional Awareness and Emotional Healing, Alcoholics Anonymous, and other programs. Mr.

David said that he attends AA meetings three times a week and has had a sponsor for many years. Mr. David explained that Restorative Justice has impacted his rehabilitation by listening to victims' relatives talk about how much they suffered. Mr. David said that he has gone on the weekend retreat, completed the 8 week program, and is 4 weeks into the 32 week program. In addition, Mr. David told the Board that getting his G.E.D., despite his learning disabilities, has helped him feel better about himself.

When asked about his parole plan, Mr. David requested a step-down to lower security and then a release to a long-term residential treatment program. Mr. David works at the prison as a welder and believes he could become an ironworker, if released. Mr. David has the support of his parents and long-term counselor and plans to continue with counseling, attend church, and attend Alcoholics Anonymous. Mr. David would also be open to taking Vivitrol.

Mr. David's parents and a friend testified in support of parole. Multiple letters in support of parole were submitted, as well. Norfolk County Assistant District Attorney Michael McGee testified in opposition to parole.

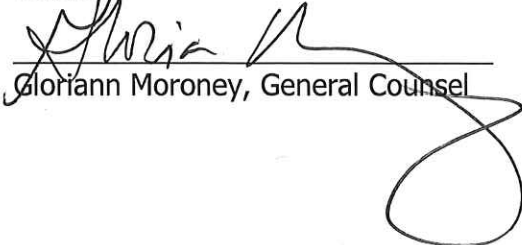
III. DECISION

The Board is of the unanimous opinion that Stephen David has demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. David has been active in programming to address his causative factors. He has been sober for approximately 23 years. In addition, Mr. David has completed Restorative Justice and Emotional Awareness and is active in Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous.

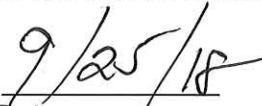
The applicable standard used by the Board to assess a candidate for parole is: "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such offender is released, the offender will live and remain at liberty without violating the 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. David'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. David's risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Mr. David's case, the Board is of the opinion that Stephen David merits parole at this time to a long term residential program, upon completion of 12 months in lower security and subject to special conditions.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Waive work for long term residential program; Must be home between 10 pm and 6 am; GPS; Supervise for drugs, testing in accordance with agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence, testing in accordance with agency policy; Report to assigned MA Parole Officer on day of release; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment/transition; Long term residential treatment program; Attend Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous at least three times/week; Mandatory sponsor; Mandatory sobriety.

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



Date