

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

WILFRED DACIER

W62511

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: January 23, 2020

DATE OF DECISION: June 15, 2020

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

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 granted to the Farren Care Center with special conditions.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On April 15, 1997, in Middlesex Superior Court, Wilfred Dacier pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of his 34-year-old sister, Susan Dacier. Accordingly, a sentence of life in prison with the possibility of parole was imposed on Mr. Dacier.

In October 1995, Mr. Dacier (age 38) and his sister were living together in Lowell. During the early morning hours of October 21, Mr. Dacier walked into Ms. Dacier's bedroom to discuss the household financial situation. An argument ensued. Subsequently, Mr. Dacier went to his bedroom and retrieved a large military style knife. Mr. Dacier then returned to his sister's bedroom, where he proceeded to stab her 14 times in the face and body as she lay in bed. Mr. Dacier then called his brother and sister-in-law, stating that he did "a real bad thing" after he became angry and threw a knife at his sister. His sister-in-law told Mr. Dacier to call 911, while they contacted the Lowell Police Department. When police arrived at the home, they found Mr. Dacier sitting on the front steps with a cell phone. There was blood on his hands and clothing.

In the second-floor bedroom, they discovered Ms. Dacier lying on her bed, bleeding profusely and unresponsive. Shortly thereafter, Ms. Dacier was pronounced dead at the hospital.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON JANUARY 23, 2020

Wilfred Dacier, now 63-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on January 23, 2020. He was represented by Harvard Law students Hadley Ayaz and Blair Ganson. After Mr. Dacier's initial hearing in 2010, he was granted parole with the condition of acceptance into a Department of Mental Health (DMH) secured facility. However, in 2011, Mr. Dacier was evaluated by the DMH and found not to meet the criteria for DMH services. As a result of Mr. Dacier's inability to meet the Board's prescribed vote requirements, his parole was rescinded in December 2013, and he was placed on the next available hearing list (PONAL). A review hearing took place on April 1, 2014, and the Board voted "action pending." As well, in 2015, the Board voted to "continue action pending." Parole was denied after his hearing on April 26, 2016. Mr. Dacier appealed the Board's decision and was granted a new parole hearing. After a review hearing in 2017, he was again denied parole.

At this hearing, Mr. Dacier told the Board that he has done a great deal of work on himself in prison to ensure that he becomes a better person. If something bothers him, he likes to address the situation. The Board noted that at the time of the murder, there was a conflict between Mr. Dacier and his sister, which was exacerbated by their mother's failing health. This conflict was compounded by the symptoms of Mr. Dacier's mental illness and his substance abuse. Mr. Dacier expressed his remorse for what he did to someone he loved, adding that his crime should not be minimized. He explained that he will continue to work on himself for the rest of his life. When Board Members noted the structure of his current facility, Mr. Dacier assured them that he is not worried about transitioning to a less structured minimum-security facility. He explained that he meets with a mental health clinician twice a month and is aware that the world has changed since his incarceration 25 years ago. As to any mental health concerns, Mr. Dacier explained that he does not decompensate, if he stays busy. Currently, he works in the optical shop and is able to order his own canteen. He reads the bible, as well as information on recovery, and he exercises. He has also attended Alcoholics Anonymous. If released to the community, Mr. Dacier plans to rely on a schedule with structure.

When questioned by the Board, Mr. Dacier stated that he is able to manage any anger issues. He also spoke about how he manages mental distortions, including his ability to verify distortions by asking others around him. He is also working on building a network of supports in the community. Although he hasn't had any contact with his immediate family, Mr. Dacier stated that he has addressed his family history in therapy. When Dr. Kerry Nelligan spoke in regard to her evaluation of Mr. Dacier, she stated that he is a low risk parole candidate, should the appropriate release plan be established. She spoke about Behavioral Health Community Partner (BHCP) services in the community, as well as other programs that could assist Mr. Dacier, if paroled. Dr. Nelligan indicated that there are ample interventions that could be put in place to help "shore" up his transition.

The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Mr. Dacier's friend. The Board considered testimony from Middlesex Assistant District Attorney Daniel Harren, who spoke in opposition to parole.

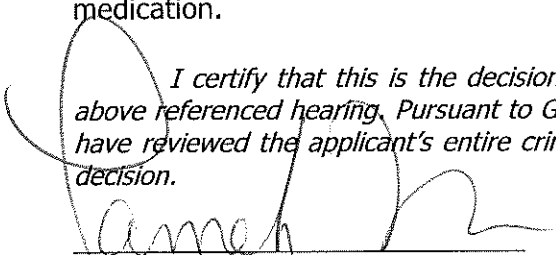
III. DECISION

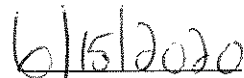
The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Dacier has demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. His suitability for parole is contingent on his placement in the Farren Center. There, the staff will be able to meet his medical and mental health needs. Mr. Dacier has been incarcerated since 1995 for the murder of his sister. Mr. Dacier recognizes that he needs to remain compliant with his mental health case plan and medication regimen. This has allowed him to achieve stability. He and his counsel agree he needs structure. Mr. Dacier has been consistently compliant with his treatment plan. In addition, the Board considered testimony from Dr. Kerry Nelligan, who considers Mr. Dacier a low risk to reoffend.

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. Dacier's institutional behavior, as well as his participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of his incarceration. The Board also considered a risk and needs assessment and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Dacier's risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of his case, the Board is of the opinion that Wilfred Dacier merits parole at this time. Parole is granted to the Farren Care Center with special conditions.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Waive work for Farren Care Center; ELMO-GPS; Must take prescribed medication; 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 family; Residential Program - Farren Care Center; Mandatory - Must remain compliant with medical and mental health case plan to include medication.

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.


Pamela Murphy, General Counsel


Date