



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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Paul M. Treseler
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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

WILSON MORALES

W56628

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: July 17, 2017

DATE OF DECISION: September 6, 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 not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review scheduled in four years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On June 6, 1994, in Hampden Superior Court, Wilson Morales pleaded guilty to second degree murder in the death of Pablo Sanchez. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he was found guilty of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon, for which he received a 5 to 10 year concurrent sentence. He was also found guilty of armed assault with intent to murder and received a 10 to 20 year concurrent sentence. Mr. Morales has one co-defendant, his brother Angel Morales.

On August 31, 1992, in Holyoke, an argument over a drug transaction led to an altercation between Angel Morales, Pablo Sanchez, and another man. Angel Morales fled from the fight and returned to the area with his brother Wilson Morales, who was armed with a gun. The Morales brothers engaged in a physical altercation with Mr. Sanchez and the other man, during which Wilson Morales fired several shots at both men, fatally wounding Mr. Sanchez and

seriously wounding the other. After the shooting, the Morales brothers fled first to New Jersey, and then to Puerto Rico, before surrendering to authorities.

In 2001, Mr. Morales appealed his conviction, claiming error in the denial of his new trial motion in which he sought to withdraw guilty pleas made nearly 10 years earlier. On October 25, 2005, the order denying motion for new trial was affirmed.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON JULY 17, 2017

On July 1, 2008, Mr. Morales was granted parole to a long term residential treatment after his initial hearing. On November 3, 2008, he was paroled to the Harmony House, where he remained compliant with parole conditions until January 10, 2009. On that date, Mr. Morales was terminated from the Harmony House (and admitted to the Psychiatric Ward at St. Luke's Hospital for an evaluation), after he claimed that residents at the Harmony House "tried to stitch his eyes shut after implanting tracking/controlling devices in his head." On March 26, 2009, parole was revoked. Mr. Morales had review hearings in 2009 and 2012, both of which resulted in the denial of parole.

Wilson Morales, now 48-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on July 17, 2017, and was represented by Attorney Russell Sobelman. Mr. Morales was afforded the services of an interpreter. Attorney Sobelman provided an opening statement on Mr. Morales' behalf, highlighting accomplishments since his last hearing and providing a proposed parole plan. The Board reviewed Mr. Morales' institutional adjustment and noted that he has not incurred any disciplinary infractions since his last hearing. Mr. Morales is currently incarcerated at Old Colony Correctional Center and is employed as a runner. He attends religious services and NA/AA meetings and is enrolled in English as a Second Language. Mr. Morales meets with his mental health clinician on a regular basis and is medication compliant.

The Board discussed Mr. Morales' prior parole failure, as well as his understanding as to his mental health diagnosis. Mr. Morales indicated that he now recognizes his decompensation was due to his failure to maintain compliance with his medication regimen. It wasn't until after his last hearing did Mr. Morales come to the realization that the delusional thoughts that consumed him (and, subsequently, lead to his re-incarceration) were a break from reality. Mr. Morales informed the Board that he now understands the importance of maintaining compliance with his medication and treatment protocol. He attributed his propensity for violence to his mental illness and his age/maturity. Mr. Morales spoke of a dysfunctional lifestyle leading up to the underlying offense. After being sold a bad bag of heroin, his brother/co-defendant sought him out to retaliate against the drug dealers. Mr. Morales fired several rounds after a verbal confrontation with the victims. He often possessed a firearm for protection, as he was selling drugs.

Mr. Morales had several supporters in attendance at his hearing. The Board considered testimony from two family members, both of whom expressed strong support for parole. The Holyoke Police Department submitted a letter in opposition to parole.


III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Wilson Morales has not yet demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. A longer period of positive adjustment and program involvement is necessary to continue to address his causative factors, including mental health treatment and medication compliance.

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. Morales' 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. Morales' risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Morales' case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Wilson Morales is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Morales' next appearance before the Board will take place in four years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Morales 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

9/6/18
Date