

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

WILSON PASTEUR

W80893

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: July 9, 2020

DATE OF DECISION: December 30, 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 his ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detainer with special conditions.¹

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On October 18, 2000, in Essex Superior Court, Wilson Pasteur was found guilty of second-degree murder in the death of 17-year-old Savorn Prom on a theory of joint venture. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, Mr. Pasteur was found guilty of unlawfully carrying a dangerous weapon. He received a 4 to 5 year sentence concurrent with his murder conviction.

Just before midnight on June 5, 2000, 19-year-old Wilson Pasteur (a member of security threat group STG1), along with his two accomplices, Eric Miller (age 18), and Derek Wright (age 19), shot and killed Savorn Prom in the city of Lynn. Mr. Prom had allegedly belonged to a rival security threat group (STG2). A few days prior to the murder, Mr. Wright was allegedly beaten

¹ Mr. Pasteur will be paroled to his ICE detainer and deported to Haiti.

by members of STG2. When Mr. Wright approached Mr. Miller and Mr. Pasteur, they conspired to retaliate for the beating. On the night of the murder, Mr. Wright armed himself with a stolen .357 Magnum handgun, and Mr. Pasteur armed himself with a stolen .44 handgun. Mr. Pasteur, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Miller (who was unarmed) walked down a street in Lynn looking for members of rival STG2. When they saw their targets in a car, a confrontation developed between the two groups. Mr. Pasteur pulled out his gun, firing one shot toward the rival group. Then, his gun jammed. Mr. Wright then fired a number of shots, including the .357 bullet that killed Mr. Prom. The three men fled the scene, but police eventually found Mr. Pasteur and Mr. Miller hiding in a closet in a Boston apartment.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON JULY 9, 2020

Wilson Pasteur, now 40-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on July 9, 2020. He was represented by Harvard Prison Legal Assistance Project student Lyla Wasz-Piper. Mr. Pasteur had been denied parole after both his initial hearing in 2015 and his review hearing in 2018. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Pasteur expressed his sorrow for the murder of Mr. Prom and accepted full responsibility for his crime. When Board Members discussed his criminal lifestyle during his childhood and early adulthood, Mr. Pasteur explained that his gang affiliations began when he was approximately 14-years-old. As such, he received several Department of Youth Services (DYS) convictions that were indicative of violence. Upon questioning, Mr. Pasteur attributed his criminal behavior to being "a hardheaded kid," who was "stuck in the streets." The Board inquired as to the abuse he experienced as a child and whether it contributed to his propensity for violence. Although Mr. Pasteur acknowledged that his father was abusive, he told the Board that he could not "shift blame" and admitted that he is fully accountable for the decisions he made. When Board Members asked him about his thought pattern at the time of the governing offenses, Mr. Pasteur stated, "Retaliation." He further explained that his "views on life," along with his desire to impress fellow gang members, coincided with his involvement in Mr. Prom's death.

The Board noted Mr. Pasteur's dedication towards his rehabilitation. Upon questioning, Mr. Pasteur stated that his transformation began around 2009. Initially, he admitted that he struggled with rehabilitation due to his gang affiliation and, despite the desire to improve, he found himself torn between gang life and a pro-social life. Moreover, Mr. Pasteur indicated that gang involvement was "addictive" and, though he "knew it was wrong," he kept "keep going back." In 2013, he began the renunciation process, however. When Board Members questioned him as to what precipitated his ultimate decision to leave the gang, Mr. Pasteur asserted that it was due to his programming efforts and his Islamic faith. Through religion, he was able to come to certain realizations, stating, "I sacrificed everything growing up for people who were never my friends." As to his participation in Restorative Justice, Mr. Pasteur told Board Members that he gained insight as to how his crime affected the whole community, rather than just the victim. He shared how he spoke with a man traumatized by his (Mr. Pasteur's) actions when the man heard the gunshots that killed Mr. Prom. Mr. Pasteur characterized this encounter as "profound." In addition to Restorative Justice, Mr. Pasteur completed approximately 75 programs and proposed three programs to the Department of Corrections, for which Board Members commended him. Although he successfully completed the renunciation process, Mr. Pasteur identified aspects that could be improved within the program to aid inmates who have renounced gang affiliations. He explained that the concept behind the program was "taking a person out of a negative situation and providing them with something better." Mr. Pasteur also proposed a Domestic Violence program, as well as a reading program for inmates with children.

Upon further questioning, Mr. Pasteur shared with the Board that, throughout his incarceration, he has attempted to gain a better understanding of Mr. Prom's life. He has since learned that Mr. Prom had a good sense of humor and was a "jokester." Additionally, both he and Mr. Prom, along with their families, immigrated to the United States, likely sharing similar experiences as they grew up. When Board Members inquired about his deportation order, Mr. Pasteur stated, "Mr. Prom came to this country in hopes of a better life and I robbed him of that." As such, he believes that he does not "deserve" to stay in the United States and accepts the consequences of his actions. If paroled, Mr. Pasteur anticipates being deported to Haiti, where his father, stepmother, and additional family members reside. He plans on teaching basic English to young students at his father's school. Additionally, he told the Board that he would continue to practice Islam, which had a significant impact on his rehabilitation. As to anticipated challenges during re-integration, Mr. Pasteur stated that the "rejection aspect" will be hard to accept, but understands that it is part of the process. Mr. Pasteur's support system includes his family, both in the United States and in Haiti. Although Mr. Pasteur expects to be deported, he provided the Board with additional release plans, should he remain in the United States.

The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Mr. Pasteur's siblings. The Board also considered testimony in opposition to parole from Essex County Assistant District Attorney Emily Mello. Essex County District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett submitted a letter of opposition.


III. DECISION

Mr. Pasteur has served 20 years for the murder of Savorn Prom. Since his last hearing, he has continued to invest in his rehabilitation. Not only has he continued to engage in meaningful treatment/programming, he has developed three proposals for the Department of Correction to assist other offenders [on how to] address their causative factors. He has also continued to maintain a positive adjustment. He was well prepared for his parole hearing and presented a thoughtful parole plan with a strong support network. It is the opinion of the Board that he made a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible 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. Pasteur'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. Pasteur's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Pasteur's case, the Board is of the opinion that Wilson Pasteur has been rehabilitated and, therefore, merits parole at this time. Parole is granted to his ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detainer with special conditions.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Approve home plan before release; Release to other authority - ICE; Waive work for two weeks; Must be at home between 10 pm and 6 am; Electronic monitoring; 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; Must have substance abuse evaluation- adhere to plan; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment/transition.

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 
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

12/30/20
Date