



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

JULIUS BOWLES

W33862

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing
DATE OF HEARING: September 22, 2015
DATE OF DECISION: December 22, 2015

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Paul M. Treseler, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sheila Dupre, Tonomey Coleman, Ina Howard-Hogan, Tina Hurley, Lucy Soto-Abbe.

DECISION OF THE BOARD: After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying 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 November 6, 1972, in Suffolk Superior Court, Julius Bowles pled guilty to the armed robbery and second degree murder of John J. Piotti. Subsequently a sentence of life in prison was imposed on Mr. Bowles for the murder of Mr. Piotti. Mr. Bowles was also sentenced to a concurrent term of life in prison for his conviction of armed robbery. On November 14, 1972, in Suffolk Superior Court, Mr. Bowles pled guilty to 8 counts of armed robbery and 1 count of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon. Mr. Bowles was sentenced to concurrent terms of not more than 30 years and not less than 20 years in prison for his convictions of armed robbery. A concurrent term of not more than 10 years and not less than 9 years in prison was imposed on Mr. Bowles for his conviction of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon. On January 3, 1979 Mr. Bowles's concurrent life sentences were

commuted to 11 years and 6 months. From July 1979 to May 2004 Mr. Bowles's was granted parole on 4 separate occasions, each of which was revoked.

The facts of the governing offenses are as follows: On May 5, 1972 Julius Bowles and his co-defendant, James Coar, entered a television store. Mr. Coar then pushed the clerk, Mr. Piotti, into a back room where a struggle ensued. As Mr. Coar and Mr. Piotti fought, Mr. Bowles removed \$45 from the cash register. Mr. Piotti was stabbed 3 times by Mr. Coar. After Mr. Piotti collapsed, Mr. Bowles and Mr. Coar removed additional money from Mr. Piotti's wallet. Mr. Bowles and Mr. Coar then fled the scene as Mr. Piotti bled to death.

Mr. Bowles's history on parole is as follows: On July 31, 1979 Mr. Bowles was released on parole for the first time. Mr. Bowles's parole was revoked on November 10, 1980 for possession of narcotics and association with persons having a criminal record. Mr. Bowles absconded on furlough while in custody for these offenses. He was returned to custody 44 days later after being hospitalized for a stab wound.

In February of 1983 Mr. Bowles was released on parole for the second time. Within five months of his release to a residential treatment facility, Mr. Bowles's parole was revoked. Mr. Bowles's parole violations included leaving the treatment center without permission.

On March 20, 1985 Mr. Bowles was paroled for the third time. Mr. Bowles was re-incarcerated on December 30, 1985 when he was arrested for unlawful possession of a firearm and armed robbery. On May 19, 1986, in Suffolk Superior Court, Mr. Bowles pled guilty to these charges. Mr. Bowles was sentenced to a term of not more than 15 years and not less than 12 years in prison for his conviction of armed robbery. Mr. Bowles was also sentenced to a term of not more than 5 years and not less than 3 years in prison for his conviction of unlawful possession of a firearm. Both sentences were ordered to be run concurrent with Mr. Bowles's life sentences. On November 12, 1986, Mr. Bowles's parole from his prior sentences was revoked.

In January of 1997, Mr. Bowles was released on parole for the fourth time. In May of 2004, Mr. Bowles's parole was revoked for alcohol use and association with persons having a criminal record. Mr. Bowles has remained in custody since that time.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

Mr. Bowles came before the Parole Board on September 22, 2015 for a review hearing. This was his fifth appearance before the Board since May 2004. Mr. Bowles's subsequent appearances before the Board in 2004, 2006, 2007 and 2010, were all denied. Mr. Bowles was represented by Attorney James Rosseel during his appearance before the Board.

Over the course of the hearing, Mr. Bowles spoke about the day of the murder. In May of 1972 Mr. Bowles was addicted to cocaine and heroin. On the day of Mr. Piotti's death, May 5th, Mr. Bowles and Mr. Coar needed money to purchase drugs and decided to rob a record store. According to Mr. Bowles he planned to gain access to the store's cash register by distracting the clerk with an innocuous request. After entering the store, Mr. Bowles asked the clerk, Mr. Piotti, to retrieve a musical record for him. As Mr. Bowles was removing money from the cash register, he heard a noise. When Mr. Bowles went to the rear of the store he saw that Mr. Coar had stabbed Mr. Piotti. Additional money was stolen from Mr. Piotti's wallet, before both men fled the scene.

When questioned by the Board, Mr. Bowles's attributed his parole violations to his addiction to cocaine and heroin as well as his unauthorized consumption of alcohol. Mr. Bowles, however, denied having an addiction issue with alcohol. When asked to describe his

relapse prevention strategy, Mr. Bowles explained to the Board that he intended to just "say no".

In addition to Mr. Bowles, the Board also received live testimony from members of Mr. Bowles's family, all of whom expressed support for his release. The Board also considered letters received from the community, which expressed opposition to Mr. Bowles's petition for parole. These letters included communications from the Boston Police Department and the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office.

III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Bowles has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. The Board believes a longer period of positive institutional adjustment would be beneficial to Mr. Bowles's rehabilitation.

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. Bowles'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 whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Bowles's risk of recidivism.

After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Bowles's case, the Board is of the opinion that Mr. Bowles is not yet rehabilitated and therefore does not merit parole at this time. Mr. Bowles's next appearance before the Board will take place in four years from the date of the review hearing related to this decision. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Bowles 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.


Michael J. Callahan, Executive Director


Date