



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

ROBERT BOND

W41965

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 9, 2017

DATE OF DECISION: March 12, 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 five years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On January 10, 1983, in Suffolk Superior Court, Robert Bond was found guilty of murder in the second degree and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole, from and after his sentence for manslaughter received on or about April 20, 1972. At the time of the murder, Mr. Bond was on parole for his manslaughter conviction. Mr. Bond appealed his second degree murder conviction. The court set aside the verdict, holding that hearsay evidence was improperly admitted at trial. Mr. Bond was granted a new trial and, on November 23, 1985, he was again convicted of murder in the second degree.

Mr. Bond and Mary Foreman had been involved in a personal relationship for some time. On October 23, 1981, Mr. Bond shot Ms. Foreman in the head, killing her. Earlier that evening, Ms. Foreman left her home in Dorchester (after receiving a telephone call from Mr. Bond) and went to a community meeting at 88 Walnut Street. After she left the meeting, she was seen

near 82 Walnut Street arguing with a man identified at trial to be Mr. Bond. They were then observed going into the basement of 82 Walnut Street. Gunshots were heard, and Mr. Bond was observed leaving the building. Ms. Foreman's body was subsequently discovered in the downstairs storage area of a building at 82 Walnut Street in Boston. Mr. Bond was arrested for the murder on November 20, 1981.

At the time of the murder of Ms. Foreman, Mr. Bond was on parole for the manslaughter of Barbara Mitchell, a woman with whom he had a previous relationship. On January 30, 1971, Mr. Bond stabbed Ms. Mitchell with a large knife. The knife penetrated Ms. Mitchell's liver and caused her death. He pleaded guilty to manslaughter, received a sentence of 15 to 20 years, and was granted parole on June 12, 1981.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 9, 2017

Robert Bond, now 81-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board on May 9, 2017, for a review hearing and was represented by Student Attorneys Annie Manhardt and Susana Cervantes of the Harvard Prison Legal Assistance Project. He was previously denied parole after hearings in 2000, 2005, and 2011. Mr. Bond has served approximately 32 years of his sentence. In his opening statement, through counsel, Mr. Bond maintained that the death of Ms. Foreman was an accident. He acknowledged, however, that he behaved recklessly and selfishly on the night of the murder, when he agreed to hide his friend's gun and fled the scene upon realizing that Ms. Foreman was injured. Mr. Bond accepted full responsibility for the pain and anguish that his actions caused the family and friends of Ms. Foreman, his own family, and the community.

Mr. Bond indicated that he struggled to adapt to prison life due to his cooperation with the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office in securing a murder conviction against another inmate. While in prison, Mr. Bond earned his GED and participated in several programs. He also indicated that he maintains contact with several family members and a childhood friend, all of whom continue to support his release. Currently, Mr. Bond suffers from a number of medical conditions, including metastatic prostate cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease ("COPD"), coronary artery disease, and hypertension. Mr. Bond spoke on his own behalf and indicated to the Board that Ms. Foreman was a "dear friend." He expressed his remorse for leaving Ms. Foreman in the basement and for not coming forward immediately following her death.

During the hearing, Mr. Bond conceded that he has not changed his story about what happened on the night of the murder since his first parole hearing in 2000; that the murder of Ms. Foreman was accidental. The Board, however, noted that it did not find Mr. Bond's version of what happened to be credible. The Board expressed concern with Mr. Bond's history of domestic violence, and the fact that the murder of Ms. Foreman occurred while Mr. Bond was on parole for the manslaughter of Ms. Mitchell. In describing the manslaughter of Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Bond indicated that he and Ms. Mitchell were in the kitchen of her residence when they got into an argument about ending their relationship. Mr. Bond then took a knife out of Ms. Mitchell's hand and stabbed her. Mr. Bond conceded that he was involved in domestic violence with four different women. He believes that his violence against women stemmed from individuals he "hung with," but that he is now a different person. He states that he is now patient and noted that he has participated in a program that addresses domestic violence.

The Board considered the testimony of Ms. Foreman's grandson, brother, two daughters, and the mother of Ms. Foreman's grandson, all of whom opposed parole. The Board also considered the testimony of Assistant District Attorney Charles Bartoloni, who also opposed parole.

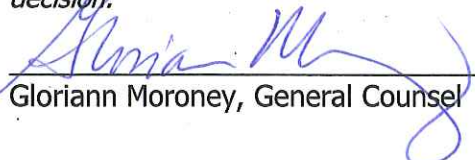
III. DECISION

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Bond has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Bond was on parole for manslaughter when he committed the governing offense. Further, Mr. Bond has a history of domestic violence and violence against women. Release does not meet the legal standard.

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

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


Date