



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**NELSON TRONGEAU**

**W40545**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** July 25, 2017

**DATE OF DECISION:** April 17, 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 a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is granted to the Interstate Compact via the state of Maine, with special conditions.

**I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

On June 19, 1984, in Essex Superior Court, Nelson Trongeau pleaded guilty to the second degree murder of Alice Michaud and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. There were no appeals on this matter.

Nelson Trongeau shot and killed Alice Michaud on May 4, 1983, as she walked on Fourth Avenue in Haverhill. Nelson Trongeau was driving with his brother, David Trongeau, and their friend, Gregory Marini, when they decided to commit a robbery. With his sawed-off .22 caliber rifle in the car, Nelson Trongeau spotted a woman walking alone and pulled over near her. He pointed the gun at Alice Michaud and demanded her money. Ms. Michaud laughed at Nelson Trongeau, turned her back, and walked away. He fired his rifle at Ms. Michaud. The bullet entered the victim's back and severed her spinal cord. Nelson Trongeau drove away and, later, threw the rifle in the Merrimack River.

## **II. PAROLE HEARING ON JULY 25, 2017**

Mr. Trongeau was denied parole after his initial hearing in 1998, as well as at his review hearings in 2000 and 2006. Mr. Trongeau was paroled in 2007, but was returned to custody on January 13, 2012. His parole was revoked in March 2012. Mr. Trongeau's performance on parole supervision began to deteriorate after losing his job in 2009, when the construction company went out of business. He claims he became depressed after several months of being unable to secure full-time employment. Mr. Trongeau was issued four graduated sanctions between April 2010 and December 2011, for failing to pay supervision fees and for failing to find and maintain legitimate employment.

Mr. Trongeau, now 55-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board for a review hearing on July 25, 2017. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Trongeau expressed his remorse for taking the life of Alice Michaud. Additionally, he spoke of his embarrassment and shame for squandering his prior parole opportunity. If granted parole, Mr. Trongeau said that he would follow the rules and communicate better with his parole officer. In discussing his prior parole failure, Mr. Trongeau now understands that it was his lack of candor, his failure to adequately address his mental health issues, and his complacency regarding work, as the underlying factors that led to his re-incarceration. Mr. Trongeau has maintained his sobriety for approximately 25 years and fully recognizes that active participation in NA/AA is an integral component in maintaining his sobriety. If granted parole, Mr. Trongeau understands that he needs to utilize his support network and must be forthright with the Parole Board.

Since his last hearing, Mr. Trongeau has participated in numerous programs, including Able Minds, Mental Health Group Counseling, and the Native American Spiritual Council. He regularly attends AA/NA and AA Big Book programs.

Mr. Trongeau had supporters at his hearing, as well as letters of support that were submitted on his behalf. The Board considered oral testimony from his wife, who expressed strong support for parole. Essex County Assistant District Attorney Emily Mello submitted a letter and spoke in opposition to parole.

## **III. DECISION**

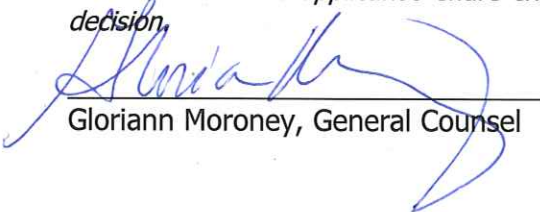
Re-incarceration has served its purpose. Mr. Trongeau is actively engaged in AA/NA, Big Book, and mental health treatment. He understands the ramifications for failing to adhere to the conditions of the Massachusetts Parole Board.

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. Trongeau'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. Trongeau's risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Mr. Trongeau's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that Nelson

Trongeau is a suitable candidate for parole at this time to the Interstate Compact via Maine, with special conditions.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Interstate Compact with Maine; Waive work for two weeks; Must be at home between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. at Parole Officer's discretion; GPS at Parole Officer's discretion; Must take prescribed medication; Supervise for drugs, testing in accordance with agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence, testing in accordance with agency policy; Follow reporting instructions from Maine; Must have mental health counseling 1:1; AA/NA at least three times a week.

*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

4/17/18  
Date