

Fordham Law School

FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History

Parole Administrative Appeal Decisions

Parole Administrative Appeal Documents

December 2020

Administrative Appeal Decision - Montero, David (2019-02-27)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/aad>

Recommended Citation

"Administrative Appeal Decision - Montero, David (2019-02-27)" (2020). Parole Information Project
<https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/aad/101>

This Parole Document is brought to you for free and open access by the Parole Administrative Appeal Documents at FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History. It has been accepted for inclusion in Parole Administrative Appeal Decisions by an authorized administrator of FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History. For more information, please contact tmelnick@law.fordham.edu.

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL DECISION NOTICE

Name: Montero, David Facility: Wyoming CF
NYSID: [REDACTED] Appeal Control No.: 07-042-18 B
DIN: 04-A-3629

Appearances: Norman P. Effman, Esq.
Wyoming Co. Legal Aid
18 Linwood Avenue
Warsaw, New York 14569

Decision appealed: June 2018 decision, denying discretionary release and imposing a hold of 15-months.

Board Member(s) who participated: Smith, Davis, Demosthenes


Papers considered: Appellant’s Brief received November 6, 2018

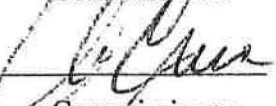
Appeals Unit Review: Statement of the Appeals Unit’s Findings and Recommendation

Records relied upon: Pre-Sentence Investigation Report, Parole Board Report, Interview Transcript, Parole Board Release Decision Notice (Form 9026), COMPAS instrument, Offender Case Plan.

Final Determination: The undersigned determine that the decision appealed is hereby:

 Affirmed Vacated, remanded for de novo interview Modified to _____
Commissioner

 Affirmed Vacated, remanded for de novo interview Modified to _____
Commissioner

 Affirmed Vacated, remanded for de novo interview Modified to _____
Commissioner

If the Final Determination is at variance with Findings and Recommendation of Appeals Unit, written reasons for the Parole Board’s determination must be annexed hereto.

This Final Determination, the related Statement of the Appeals Unit’s Findings and the separate findings of the Parole Board, if any, were mailed to the Inmate and the Inmate’s Counsel, if any, on 2/27/19 GG.

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

Name: Montero, David

DIN: 04-A-3629

Facility: Wyoming CF

AC No.: 07-042-18 B

Findings: (Page 1 of 3)

Appellant challenges the June 2018 determination of the Board, denying release and imposing a hold of 15 months.

Appellant raises the following issues in his brief: (1) the Board’s decision was arbitrary and capricious and made in violation of applicable legal authority, with too little consideration being given to Appellant’s achievements, parole packet, and release plans; (2) certain issues were not discussed during the interview to the satisfaction of Appellant; (3) the Board should not have asked Appellant if there was a plea offer relative to his current crimes of conviction; (4) the 15-month hold was excessive; (5) the Board did not properly consider the COMPAS instrument.

As to the first issue, discretionary release to parole is not to be granted “merely as a reward for good conduct or efficient performance of duties while confined but after considering if there is a reasonable probability that, if such inmate is released, he will live and remain at liberty without violating the law, **and** that his release is not incompatible with the welfare of society **and** will not so deprecate the seriousness of his crime as to undermine respect for the law.” Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A) (emphasis added); accord Matter of Hamilton v. New York State Div. of Parole, 119 A.D.3d 1268, 990 N.Y.S.2d 714 (3d Dept. 2014). “Although these standards are no longer repeated in the [Board’s] regulation, this in no way modifies the statutory mandate requiring their application.” Notice of Adoption, NY Reg, Sept. 27, 2017 at 2. A conclusion that an inmate fails to satisfy **any one** of the considerations set forth in Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A) is an independent basis to deny parole. See, e.g., Matter of Silmon v. Travis, 95 N.Y.2d 470, 477, 718 N.Y.S.2d 704, 708 (2000); Matter of Robles v. Fischer, 117 A.D.3d 1558, 1559, 985 N.Y.S.2d 386 (4th Dept. 2014); Matter of Hamilton v. New York State Div. of Parole, 119 A.D.3d 1268, 1273-74, 990 N.Y.S.2d 714, 719 (3d Dept. 2014); Matter of Phillips v. Dennison, 41 A.D.3d 17, 21, 834 N.Y.S.2d 121, 124 (1st Dept. 2007).

Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A) requires the Board to consider criteria which is relevant to the specific inmate, including, but not limited to, the inmate’s institutional record and criminal behavior. People ex rel. Herbert v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881 (1st Dept. 1983). While consideration of these factors is mandatory, “the ultimate decision to parole a prisoner is discretionary.” Matter of Silmon v. Travis, 95 N.Y.2d 470, 477, 718 N.Y.S.2d 704, 708 (2000). Thus, it is well settled that the weight to be accorded the requisite factors is solely within the Board’s discretion. See, e.g., Matter of Delacruz v. Annucci, 122 A.D.3d 1413, 997 N.Y.S.2d 872 (4th Dept. 2014); Matter of Hamilton, 119 A.D.3d at 1271, 990 N.Y.S.2d at 717; Matter of Garcia v. New York State Div. of Parole, 239 A.D.2d 235, 239, 657 N.Y.S.2d 415, 418 (1st Dept. 1997).

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

Name: Montero, David

DIN: 04-A-3629

Facility: Wyoming CF

AC No.: 07-042-18 B

Findings: (Page 2 of 3)

In the absence of a convincing demonstration that the Board did not consider the statutory factors, it must be presumed that the Board fulfilled its duty. Matter of Fuchino v. Herbert, 255 A.D.2d 914, 914, 680 N.Y.S.2d 389, 390 (4th Dept. 1998); Matter of McLain v. New York State Div. of Parole, 204 A.D.2d 456, 611 N.Y.S.2d 629 (2d Dept. 1994); Matter of McKee v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 157 A.D.2d 944, 945, 550 N.Y.S.2d 204, 205 (3d Dept. 1990); People ex rel. Herbert, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881.

As to the second issue, Appellant was provided the opportunity to discuss with the Board during the interview any issues of interest, and cannot now be heard to complain that certain issues were not discussed, or the extent to which certain issues were discussed. See Matter of Serna v. New York State Division of Parole, 279 A.D.2d 684, 719 N.Y.S. 2d 166 (3d Dept. 2001); Matter of Garcia v. New York State Div. of Parole, 239 A.D.2d 235, 657 N.Y.S.2d 415 (1st Dept. 1997).

As to the third issue, the Board is not prohibited from asking about the circumstances surrounding the crimes of conviction. The Board is entitled to rely on the sentencing minutes and to consider the circumstances of the crime. See, e.g., Matter of Platten v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 153 A.D.3d 1509, 59 N.Y.S.3d 921 (3d Dept. 2017); Matter of Herouard v. Travis, 273 A.D.2d 236, 237, 709 N.Y.S.2d 449 (2d Dept. 2000). Appellant's attorney states in his brief that this alleged prohibition against inquiry into any plea offer was not based upon legal authority but upon his "opinion". This is because there is no legal authority to support his "opinion", and in fact, the Board can consider the circumstances surrounding the crimes of conviction, which would include plea offers.

As to the fourth issue, the Board has discretion to hold an inmate for a period of up to 24 months. Executive Law § 259-i(2)(a) and 9 N.Y.C.R.R. § 8002.3(b); Matter of Tatta v. State of N.Y., Div. of Parole, 290 A.D.2d 907, 737 N.Y.S.2d 163 (3d Dept. 2002), lv. denied, 98 N.Y.2d 604, 746 N.Y.S.2d 278 (2002); Matter of Campbell v. Evans, 106 A.D.3d 1363, 965 N.Y.S.2d 672 (3d Dept. 2013). Therefore, the hold of 15 months was not excessive or improper.

As to the fifth issue, in 2011 the law was amended to require procedures incorporating risk and needs principles to "assist" the Board in making parole release decisions. Executive Law § 259-c(4). The Board satisfies this requirement in part by using the COMPAS instrument. Matter of Montane v. Evans, 116 A.D.3d 197, 202, 981 N.Y.S.2d 866, 870 (3d Dept. 2014); see also Matter of Hawthorne v. Stanford, 135 A.D.3d 1036, 1042, 22 N.Y.S.3d 640, 645 (3d Dept. 2016); Matter of LeGeros v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 139 A.D.3d 1068, 30 N.Y.S.3d 834 (2d Dept. 2016); Matter of Robles v. Fischer, 117 A.D.3d 1558, 1559, 985 N.Y.S.2d 386, 387 (4th Dept. 2014). Notably, the 2011 amendments did not eliminate the requirement that the Board conduct a case-by-case review of each inmate by considering the statutory factors including the instant

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

Name: Montero, David

DIN: 04-A-3629

Facility: Wyoming CF

AC No.: 07-042-18 B

Findings: (Page 3 of 3)

offense. The amendments also did not change the three substantive standards that the Board is required to apply when deciding whether to grant parole. See Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(A). Thus, the COMPAS instrument cannot mandate a particular result. Matter of King v. Stanford, 137 A.D.3d 1396, 26 N.Y.S.3d 815 (3d Dept. 2016). Rather, the COMPAS is an additional consideration that the Board must weigh along with the statutory factors for the purposes of deciding whether the three standards are satisfied. See Matter of Rivera v. N.Y. State Div. of Parole, 119 A.D.3d 1107, 1108, 990 N.Y.S.2d 295 (3d Dept. 2014); accord Matter of Dawes v. Annucci, 122 A.D.3d 1059, 994 N.Y.S.2d 747 (3d Dept. 2014); see also Matter of Gonzalvo v. Stanford, 153 A.D.3d 1021, 56 N.Y.S.3d 896 (3d Dept. 2017). Furthermore, declining to afford the COMPAS controlling weight does not violate the 2011 amendments. Matter of King v. Stanford, 137 A.D.3d 1396, 26 N.Y.S.3d 815 (3d Dept. 2016). Additionally, even certain low COMPAS scores would not have placed the onus on the Board to provide countervailing evidence to support its determination. The 2011 amendments require the Board to incorporate risk and needs assessment principles to “assist” in measuring an inmate’s rehabilitation and likelihood of success upon release. See Executive Law § 259-c(4). The statute thus does not clearly create a presumption of rehabilitation based on a favorable risk and needs assessment, let alone a presumption of parole release requiring the Board to provide countervailing evidence. Indeed, while the Board might, for example, find an inmate sufficiently rehabilitated to satisfy the first prong of the standard—that the inmate will “live and remain at liberty without violating the law,” the Board could also find, in its discretion, that the inmate’s release would be incompatible with the welfare of society, or would unduly deprecate the seriousness of a crime. The text of the statute therefore flatly contradicts the inmate’s assertion that certain low COMPAS scores create a presumption of release. See Matter of King v. Stanford, 137 A.D.3d at 1397.

Recommendation: Affirm.