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STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL DECISION NOTICE

Name: Schmidt, Michael

Facility: Collins CF

NYSID: [REDACTED]

Appeal Control No.: 07-185-18 B

DIN: 18-A-1742

Appearances: Charles J. Greenberg, Esq.
3840 East Robinson Rd. #318
Amherst, New York 14228

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




Board Member(s) who participated: Alexander, Agostini, Shapiro

Papers considered: Appellant's Brief received February 20, 2019

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.

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

 Commissioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affirmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacated, remanded for de novo interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Modified to _____
 Commissioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affirmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacated, remanded for de novo interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Modified to _____
 Commissioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affirmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacated, remanded for de novo interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Modified to _____

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 5/10/19 GG.

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

Name: Schmidt, Michael

DIN: 18-A-1742

Facility: Collins CF

AC No.: 07-185-18 B

Findings: (Page 1 of 3)

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

Appellant is serving an indeterminate term of imprisonment of 1 to 3 years after having been convicted by plea to Criminal Contempt 1st. Appellant has an extensive criminal history. Appellant shoved and strangled his female victim in violation of the terms of an order of protection.

Appellant raises the following issues in his brief: (1) the Board’s decision was arbitrary, capricious, irrational, and made in violation of applicable legal authority; (2) the Board did not provide sufficient weight to Appellant’s programming, family support, release plans, and that he has “no notable disciplinary issues”; (3) the Board failed to prepare a Transitional Accountability Plan (TAP); (4) the COMPAS instrument may have contained erroneous information; (5) certain issues were not discussed during the interview; (6) the Board’s decision was made in violation of Appellant’s due process rights; (7) the Board’s decision was tantamount to a resentencing of Appellant; (8) the 15-month hold was excessive; (9) the Board’s decision was predetermined; and (10) Appellant is entitled to parole release based upon comparison with the circumstances of other inmates.

As to the first and second issues, 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; 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. Thus, it is well

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

Name: Schmidt, Michael

DIN: 18-A-1742

Facility: Collins CF

AC No.: 07-185-18 B

Findings: (Page 2 of 3)

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; 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). The Board need not explicitly refer to each factor in its decision, nor give them equal weight. Matter of Betancourt v. Stanford, 148 A.D.3d 1497, 49 N.Y.S.3d 315 (3d Dept. 2017); 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 Phillips v. Dennison, 41 A.D.3d 17. 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.

As to the third issue, Correction Law §71-a requires DOCCS to prepare a Transitional Accountably Plan (now known as an "Offender Case Plan") for inmates in the Department's custody based on their programming and treatment needs. In making parole release decisions, the Board must consider the most current case plan that may have been prepared by DOCCS. 9 N.Y.C.R.R. §8002.2(b). An Offender Case Plan was prepared for Appellant and made available to the Board at the time of the interview. See also Matter of Alymer v. New York State Bd. of Parole, Index No. 218-16, *Decision & Order* dated Dec. 13, 2016 (Sup. Ct. Albany Co.) (McGrath J.S.C.) (inmate's case plan met requirement of TAP in accordance with Correction Law 71-a).

As to the fourth and fifth issues, 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 sixth issue, an inmate has no Constitutional right to be released on parole before expiration of a valid sentence because a person's liberty interest is extinguished upon conviction. Greenholtz v. Inmates of Nebraska Penal & Correctional Complex, 442 U.S. 1, 99 S. Ct. 2100, 2104 (1979); Matter of Russo v. Bd. of Parole, 50 N.Y.2d 69, 427 N.Y.S.2d 982 (1980); Matter of Vineski v. Travis, 244 A.D.2d 737, 664 N.Y.S.2d 391 (3d Dept. 1997). The New York State parole scheme "holds out no more than a possibility of parole" and thus does not create a protected liberty interest implicating the due process clause. Matter of Russo, 50 N.Y.2d at 75-76, 427

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

Name: Schmidt, Michael

DIN: 18-A-1742

Facility: Collins CF

AC No.: 07-185-18 B

Findings: (Page 3 of 3)

N.Y.S.2d at 985; see also Barna v. Travis, 239 F.3d 169, 171 (2d Cir. 2001); Matter of Freeman v. New York State Div. of Parole, 21 A.D.3d 1174, 800 N.Y.S.2d 797 (3d Dept. 2005).

As to the seventh issue, Appellant's assertion that the denial of parole release amounted to an improper resentencing is without merit inasmuch as the Board fulfilled its obligation to determine the propriety of release per Executive Law §259-i(2)(c)(A) and after considering the factors set forth therein. See Executive Law §259 et seq.; Penal Law §70.40; Matter of Murray v. Evans, 83 A.D.3d 1320, 920 N.Y.S.2d 745 (3d Dept. 2011); Matter of Crews v. New York State Exec. Dept. Bd. of Parole Appeals Unit, 281 A.D.2d 672, 720 N.Y.S.2d 855 (3d Dept. 2001). Appellant has not in any manner been resentenced. Matter of Mullins v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 136 A.D.3d 1141, 1142, 25 N.Y.S.3d 698 (3d Dept. 2016).

As to the eighth 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 ninth issue, there is a presumption of honesty and integrity that attaches to judges and administrative fact-finders. See People ex. rel. Johnson v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 180 A.D.2d 914 (3d Dept. 1992). The Board is presumed to have followed applicable statutory requirements and internal policies when making decisions regarding the suitability of an inmate's possible release to parole supervision. See Garner v. Jones, 529 U.S. 244 (2000). There is no evidence that the Board's decision was predetermined. See Matter of Hakim-Zaki v. New York State Div. of Parole, 29 A.D.3d 1190 (3d Dept. 2006); Matter of Guerin v. New York State Div. of Parole, 276 A.D.2d 899 (3d Dept. 2000).

As to the tenth issue, there is no entitlement to community supervision based upon comparison with the circumstances of other inmates, as each case is *sui generis*, and the Board has full authority in each instance to give the various factors a unique weighted value. Phillips v. Dennison, 41 A.D. 3d 17 (1st Dept. 2007).

Recommendation: Affirm.