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STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL DECISION NOTICE

Name: Hall, Robert

Facility: Washington CF

NYSID: [REDACTED]

Appeal Control No.: 11-123-18 B

DIN: 95-B-2093

Appearances: Robert Hall 95B2093
Washington Correctional Facility
72 Lock 11 Lane
P.O. Box 180
Comstock, New York 12821

Decision appealed: November 2018 decision, denying discretionary release and imposing a hold of 24-months.

Board Member(s) who participated: Alexander, Berliner

Papers considered: Appellant’s Letter-brief received November 26, 2018
Appellant’s Supplemental Brief received December 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.

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APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION

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Appellant challenges the November 2018 determination of the Board, denying release and imposing a 24-month hold. Appellant raises the following issues: 1) the Board decision is arbitrary and capricious in that he did what a prior panel told him to do, and the Board acknowledged progress in some programs, but not equally to all of them. 2) he is rehabilitated. 3) no aggravating factors exist. 4) the Parole Board decision illegally resentenced him to his CR date.

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). 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). 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, 21, 834 N.Y.S.2d 121, 124 (1st Dept. 2007).

There is no requirement in the law that the board place equal or greater emphasis on petitioner’s present commendable conduct than on the gravity of his offense. People ex rel. Herbert v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 97 A.D.2d 128, 133, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881, 884 (1st Dept. 1983).

Although the Board placed great emphasis on the violent nature of the crimes and petitioner’s criminal history, it was not required to discuss or give equal weight to each statutory factor.” Matter of Wise v. State Div. of Parole, 54 A.D.3d 463, 464, 862 N.Y.S.2d 644, 645 (3d Dept. 2008).

The Board’s emphasis on the violent nature of the crime does not establish irrationality bordering on impropriety. Pulliam v Dennison, 38 A.D.3d 963, 832 N.Y.S.2d 304 (3d Dept. 2007); Sterling v Dennison, 38 A.D.3d 1145, 833 N.Y.S.2d 684 (3d Dept. 2007); Marziale v Alexander, 62 A.D.3d 1227, 879 N.Y.S.2d 636 (3d Dept. 2009). The Board may emphasize the violent nature of the instant

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offense. Marnell v Dennison, 35 A.D.3d 995, 824 N.Y.S.2d 812 (3d Dept. 2006), lv.den. 8 N.Y.3d 807, 833 N.Y.S.2d 426 (2007).

The Board may consider the inmate's past history of violent behavior. People ex rel. Herbert v New York State Board of Parole, 97 A.D.2d 128, 468 N.Y.S.2d 881, 884 (1st Dept 1983); People ex rel. Henson v Miller, 244 A.D.2d 729, 664 N.Y.S.2d 655 (3d Dept 1997), leave to appeal denied 91 N.Y.2d 809, 670 N.Y.S.2d 403 (1998); Vasquez v New York State Division of Parole, 215 A.D.2d 856, 626 N.Y.S.2d 332 (3d Dept 1995); Ward v New York State Division of Parole, 144 A.D.3d 1375, 40 N.Y.S.3d 803 (3d Dept. 2016); Mays v Stanford, 150 A.D.3d 1521, 55 N.Y.S.3d 502 (3d Dept. 2017); Allen v Stanford, 161 A.D.3d 1503, 78 N.Y.S.3d 445 (3d Dept. 2018).

The Board may consider an inmate's failure to comply with DOCCS rules in denying parole. See Matter of Almonte v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 145 A.D.3d 1307, 42 N.Y.S.3d 691 (3d Dept. 2016), lv. denied, 29 N.Y.3d 905 (2017); Matter of Karlin v. Cully, 104 A.D.3d 1285, 1286, 960 N.Y.S.2d 827, 828 (4th Dept. 2013); Matter of Stanley v. New York State Div. of Parole, 92 A.D.3d 948, 948-49, 939 N.Y.S.2d 132, 134 (2d Dept.), lv. denied, 19 N.Y.3d 806, 949 N.Y.S.2d 343 (2012).

The Board may consider a district attorney's recommendation to deny parole. Matter of Applegate v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 2164 A.D.3d 996, 997, 82 N.Y.S.3d 240 (3d Dept. 2018); Matter of Porter v. Alexander, 63 A.D.3d 945, 881 N.Y.S.2d 157 (2d Dept. 2009); Matter of Walker v. Travis, 252 A.D.2d 360, 676 N.Y.S.2d 52 (1st Dept. 1998); Matter of Walker v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 218 A.D.2d 891, 630 N.Y.S.2d 417 (3d Dept. 1995); Matter of Williams v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 220 A.D.2d 753, 633 N.Y.S.2d 182 (2d Dept. 1995); Matter of Confoy v. New York State Div. of Parole, 173 A.D.2d 1014, 569 N.Y.S.2d 846, 847 (3d Dept. 1991); Matter of Lynch v. New York State Div. of Parole, 82 A.D.2d 1012, 442 N.Y.S.2d 179 (3d Dept. 1981).

Appellant's COMPAS had high scores in two categories. The Board may consider negative aspects of the COMPAS instrument. Matter of Bush v. Annucci, 148 A.D.3d 1392, 50 N.Y.S.3d 180 (3d Dept. 2017) (COMPAS instrument with mixed results including substance abuse relevant given use before crime); Matter of Wade v. Stanford, 148 A.D.3d 1487, 52 N.Y.S.3d 508 (3d Dept. 2017) (low risk felony violence but probable risk for ██████████ related crimes); Matter of Crawford v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 144 A.D.3d 1308, 46 N.Y.S.3d 228 (3d Dept. 2016) (scores not uniformly low including family support), lv. denied, 29 N.Y.3d 901, 57 N.Y.S.3d 704 (2017).

There is no legal requirement that a second Parole Board panel must follow the recommendation of a prior Parole Board panel, nor that the same members should constitute both panels. Flores v New York State Board of Parole, 210 A.D.2d 555, 620 N.Y.S.2d 141, 142 (3d Dept 1994).

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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. 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). The Board was vested with discretion to determine whether release was appropriate notwithstanding the minimum period of incarceration set by the Court. Matter of Burress v. Dennison, 37 A.D.3d 930, 829 N.Y.S.2d 283 (3d Dept. 2007); Matter of Cody v. Dennison, 33 A.D.3d 1141, 1142, 822 N.Y.S.2d 677 (3d Dept. 2006), lv. denied, 8 N.Y.3d 802, 830 N.Y.S.2d 698 (2007). The 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).

Nothing in the Board's decision indicates a permanent denial of parole consideration. Hodge v Griffin, 2014 WL 2453333(SDNY 2014).

The Board may place greater weight on the nature of the crime without the existence of any aggravating factors. Matter of Hamilton v. New York State Div. of Parole, 119 A.D.3d 1268, 990 N.Y.S.2d 714 (3d Dept. 2014).

Denial of parole is neither arbitrary nor capricious when the Parole Board relied on the factors defined by the New York statute. Hodge v Griffin, 2014 WL 2453333(S.D.N.Y. 2014) citing Romer v Travis, 2003 WL 21744079. An arbitrary action is one without sound basis in reason and without regard to the facts. Rationality is what is reviewed under an arbitrary and capricious standard. Hamilton v New York State Division of Parole, 119 A.D.3d 1268, 990 N.Y.S.2d 714 (3d Dept. 2014). An action is arbitrary and capricious when it is taken without sound basis in reason or regard to the facts. Ward v City of Long Beach, 20 N.Y.3d 1042 (2013).

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.

Recommendation: Affirm.