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May 2021

### Administrative Appeal Decision - Baird, Douglas (2020-01-16)

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ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL DECISION NOTICE

Name: Baird, Douglas

Facility: Wyoming CF

NYSID: [REDACTED]

Appeal Control No.: 05-182-19 B

DIN: 88-C-0455

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

Decision appealed: May 2019 decision, denying discretionary release and imposing a hold of 18 months.

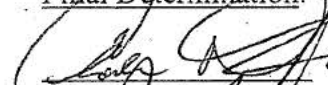
Board Member(s) who participated: Crangle, Coppola

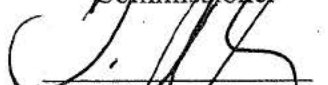
Papers considered: Appellant's Brief received August 27, 2019

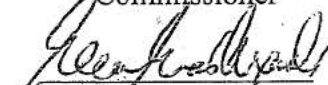
Appeals Unit Review: Statement of the Appeals Unit's Findings and Recommendation

Records relied upon: Pre-Sentence Investigation Report, Parole Board Report, Interview Transcript, Parole Board Release Decision Notice (Form 9026), COMPAS instrument, 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 11/16/20 BA.

**APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION****Name:** Baird, Douglas**DIN:** 88-C-0455**Facility:** Wyoming CF**AC No.:** 05-182-19 B**Findings:** (Page 1 of 4)

Appellant challenges the May 2019 determination of the Board, denying release and imposing a 18-month hold. Appellant's underlying instant offense involved him beating the victim to death by repeatedly striking the victim in the head with a bottle. Appellant raises the following issues: 1) the decision is irrational bordering on impropriety in that the Board failed to consider and/or properly weigh the required statutory factors. 2) the Board ignored the mostly positive COMPAS. 3) the decision illegally resentenced him. 4) the Board ignored his youth when discussing his criminal history. 5) the Board failed to list any facts in support of the statutory standard cited.

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).

The Board is permitted to consider, and place greater emphasis on, the brutal nature of the offense. Executive Law § 259-i(2)(c)(a); Matter of Applegate v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 164 A.D.3d 996, 997, 82 N.Y.S.3d 240 (3d Dept. 2018); Matter of Olmosperez v. Evans, 114 A.D.3d 1077, 1078, 980 N.Y.S.2d 845, 846 (3d Dept. 2014), aff'd 26 N.Y.3d 1014, 21 N.Y.S.3d 686 (2015); Matter of Almeyda v. New York State Div. of Parole, 290 A.D.2d 505, 736 N.Y.S.2d 275 (2d Dept. 2002); Matter of Garcia v. New York State Div. of Parole, 239 A.D.2d 235, 239-40, 657 N.Y.S.2d 415, 418 (1st Dept. 1997); Matter of Wiley v. State of New York Dept. of Corr. & Cmty. Supervision, 139 A.D.3d 1289, 32 N.Y.S.3d 370 (3d Dept. 2016); Matter of Garofolo v. Dennison, 53 A.D.3d 734, 735, 860 N.Y.S.2d 336, 338 (3d Dept. 2008); Matter of Beodeker v. Stanford, 164 A.D.3d

STATE OF NEW YORK – BOARD OF PAROLE

**APPEALS UNIT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATION**

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1555, 82 N.Y.S.3d 669 (3d Dept. 2018); Matter of Partee v. Evans, 117 A.D.3d 1258, 1259, 984 N.Y.S.2d 894 (3d Dept.), lv. denied, 24 N.Y.3d 901, 995 N.Y.S.2d 710 (2014); Matter of Marcus v. Alexander, 54 A.D.3d 476, 476, 862 N.Y.S.2d 414, 415 (3d Dept. 2008); Matter of Wellman v. Dennison, 23 A.D.3d 974, 975, 805 N.Y.S.2d 159, 160 (3d Dept. 2005).

Although the Board placed emphasis on the crime, the record reflects it also considered other appropriate factors and it was not required to place equal weight on each factor considered. Matter of Peralta v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 157 A.D.3d 1151, 69 N.Y.S.3d 885 (3d Dept. 2018). Although the Board placed emphasis on the crime, it was free to do so given all factors need not be given equal weight. Matter of Arena v. New York State Dep't of Corr. & Cmty. Supervision, 156 A.D.3d 1101, 65 N.Y.S.3d 471 (3d Dept. 2017); Matter of Gordon v. Stanford, 148 A.D.3d 1502, 50 N.Y.S.3d 627 (3d Dept. 2017); Matter of Mullins v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 136 A.D.3d 1141, 25 N.Y.S.3d 698 (3d Dept. 2016).

The Board decision may mention that he committed one offense while on parole. Matter of Webb v. Travis, 26 A.D.3d 614, 810 N.Y.S.2d 233 (3d Dept. 2006); Matter of Thompson v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 120 A.D.3d 1518, 1518-19, 992 N.Y.S.2d 464, 465 (3d Dept. 2014); Matter of Moore v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 137 A.D.3d 1375, 26 N.Y.S.3d 412, 413 (3d Dept. 2016). Matter of Ward v. New York State Div. of Parole, 144 A.D.3d 1375, 40 N.Y.S.3d 803 (3d Dept. 2016); Matter of Guzman v. Dennison, 32 A.D.3d 798, 799, 821 N.Y.S.2d 208, 208 (1st Dept. 2006).

The fact that the Board afforded greater weight to the inmate's criminal history, as opposed to other positive factors, does not render the denial of parole for that reason irrational or improper. Matter of Davis v. Evans, 105 A.D.3d 1305, 963 N.Y.S.2d 485 (3d Dept. 2013); Matter of Lashway v. Evans, 110 A.D.3d 1417, 1418, 974 N.Y.S.2d 164, 165 (3d Dept. 2013); Matter of McKee v. New York State Bd. of Parole, 157 A.D.2d 944, 550 N.Y.S.2d 204 (3d Dept. 1990). The Board was aware of appellant's age when he committed his prior crimes.

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 (1<sup>st</sup> 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 the deviant nature of the crime. Wellman v. Dennison, 23 A.D.3d 974, 805 N.Y.S.2d 159 (3d Dept. 2005).

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The Board may consider negative aspects of the COMPAS instrument. Matter of Espinal v. New York Bd. of Parole, 2019 NY Slip Op 04080, 2019 N.Y. App. Div. LEXIS 4057 (3d Dept. May 23, 2019) (COMPAS instrument yielded mixed results); 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 substance abuse alcohol 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).

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).

That the Board “did not recite the precise statutory language of Executive Law § 259-i (2)(c)(A) in support of its conclusion to deny parole does not undermine its conclusion.” 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) (citation omitted); accord Matter of Reed v. Evans, 94 A.D.3d 1323, 942 N.Y.S.2d 387 (3d Dept. 2012). The language used by the Board was “only semantically different” from the statute. Matter of Miller v. New York State Div. of Parole, 72 A.D.3d 690, 691–92, 897 N.Y.S.2d 726, 727 (2d Dept. 2010); Matter of James v. Chairman of New York State Div. of Parole, 19 A.D.3d 857, 858, 796 N.Y.S.2d 735, 736 (3d Dept. 2005); see also 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) (upholding decision that denied release as “contrary to the best interest of the community”); Matter of Murray v. Evans, 83 A.D.3d 1320, 920 N.Y.S.2d 745 (3d Dept. 2011) (Board provided adequate statutory rationale).

The appellant has failed to demonstrate that the Parole Board’s determination was affected by a showing of irrationality bordering on impropriety. Matter of Silmon v Travis, 95 N.Y.2d 470, 718 N.Y.S.2d 704 (2001); Matter of Russo v New York State Board of Parole, 50 N.Y.2d 69, 77, 427 N.Y.S.2d 982 (1980).

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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.