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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
INDETERMINATE SENTENCE REVIEW BOARD
P.O. BOX 40907, OLYMPIA, WA 98504-0907

DECISION AND REASONS

NAME:	RAMOS, Joel
DOC #:	712229
FACILITY:	Airway Heights Corrections Center (AHCC)
TYPE OF HEARING:	LTJUVBRD Hearing
HEARING DATE:	September 24, 2019
PANEL MEMBERS:	Jeff Patnode & Lori Ramsdell-Gilkey
FINAL DECISION DATE:	October 14, 2019

This matter came before the above named Board Members of the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB or the Board) for a release hearing in accordance with RCW 9.94A.730 or RCW 10.95.030. In preparation for the hearing, the Board reviewed Mr. Ramos' ISRB file. Mr. Ramos appeared in person and was represented by attorney Nancy Collins. Testimony was provided by Department of Corrections (DOC) Classification Counselor (CC) Danielle Douglas.

The recommendation dated February 17, 2015 from Joseph A. Brusic, Prosecuting Attorney for Yakima County, urged the Board to deny early release for Mr. Ramos.

LAST BOARD DECISION:

The Board last met with Mr. Ramos in a LTJUVBRD Hearing on July 25, 2017, where he was found not releasable. The Board noted that Mr. Ramos could repetition the ISRB for early release reconsideration in August of 2022.

However, in light of new Appellate Court rulings, the Board decided to schedule an earlier LTJUVBRD Hearing for Mr. Ramos in order to reconsider evidence of his rehabilitative efforts.

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CURRENT BOARD DECISION:

Based on the burden of proof set out in RCW 9.94A.730 and the totality of evidence and information provided to the Board, the Board does not find by a preponderance of the evidence that Mr. Ramos is more likely than not to commit any new criminal law violations if released on conditions. Consequently, the Board finds Mr. Ramos releasable.

NEXT ACTION:

Submit an Offender Release Plan (ORP).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

This was a deferred decision following a full Board discussion using a structured decision-making framework that takes into consideration: the statistical estimate of risk, criminal history,

parole/release history, ability to control behavior, responsivity to programming, demonstrated offender change, release planning, discordant information, and other case specific factors. Based on the requirements of RCW 9.94A.730, the Board finds Mr. Ramos is not more likely than not to commit a new crime if released with conditions that are designed to help better prepare him for a successful reentry into society. Mr. Ramos is determined to be releasable based on the following:

- **Mr. Ramos has completed the necessary programs to mitigate his risk to the community, with his most recent psychological evaluation from April 2019 assessing him as a Low risk to reoffend.**
- **Mr. Ramos has received numerous favorable reports regarding his participation in treatment, education, and vocational programming (close to an Associate of Arts (AA) Degree, Redemption/Facilitator, Thinking for a Change (T4C), Dog Handler's Program, several anger management programs, and several prison jobs with good supervisor reports.**
- **Mr. Ramos has managed his behavior appropriately in prison with no major infractions for over 10 years.**

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- **Mr. Ramos has good community support and a realistic release plan.**
- **Mr. Ramos will have 36 months of community supervision.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Mr. Ramos should continue with the positive direction he is taking. While in the community he should refrain from associating with anti-social peers and use the skills he has learned to positively impact others.

JURISDICTION:

RCW 9.94A.730, enacted in 2014, allows offenders who were under the age of 18 when they committed their crime(s) and were sentenced as adults to petition the Board for consideration of early release consideration after serving no less than 20 years of total confinement. Joel Ramos' repetition was submitted in May of 2016 and accepted, and he was found not releasable at that time. Since that hearing new case law has developed which is relevant to Mr. Ramos and, as such, he has been granted a new hearing.

Mr. Ramos entered into a plea bargain and agreed to plead guilty to the four murders with the understanding a sentence of 20 years per count would be recommended. He was convicted on August 23, 1993, in Yakima County Cause #93-1-01281-6 for Count I – Murder in the First Degree (premeditated) and Counts II, III, and IV, Murder in the First Degree (Felony). His time start was September 3, 1993. The minimum terms were set at 240 months on Counts I - IV from a Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) range of 240 to 320 months on each Count. The sentence on each Count was to be served **consecutively**, for a total of **960** months.

He was subject to a resentencing hearing and on October 15, 2013, the Court resentenced Mr. Ramos to a term of 300 months (an increase of five years) on Count I and 240 months each on Counts II – IV to be served consecutively, for a **total of 1,020** months. Mr. Ramos has served approximately 286 months in prison and 152 days in jail.

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OFFENSE DESCRIPTION:

According to file material, Joel Ramos (age 14) and a friend/co-defendant (age 14) went to the

home of a boy they knew from school. There is conflicting information about the reason they went to this home and differing stories from the co-defendants as to culpability for each murder. However, it appears that upon entering the home the adult male was confronted in the living room area and beaten and stabbed multiple times, apparently by both co-defendants. The mother was killed while showering, the 12 year old male victim was killed in the bathroom, and the six year old boy was killed in his bed.

PRIOR RISK RELATED/CRIMINAL CONDUCT:

Mr. Ramos has no other known criminal convictions or risk related conduct.

PROGRESS/BEHAVIOR:

CC Douglas provided an overview of Mr. Ramos' programming (vocational/educational and offender change) since his last hearing in 2017. She indicated Mr. Ramos has incurred no Serious Infractions since 2008 and has a number of positive behavioral observations. She stated he is currently housed in the honor pod. CC Douglas indicated Mr. Ramos has excellent family/community support and would like to release to the Yakima County area and work in the family business. She stated that the Spokane area is his backup release plan in the event community concerns arise at his proposed release address. She stated if he needs to release to another area, he has family that will assist him in financing an apartment in Spokane or another area.

Mr. Ramos indicated he has had made great strides during his time in prison and has matured greatly, as he was a 14 year old boy when he committed his offense. He could articulate the things he has done to mitigate his risk to the community and he outlined a well-defined release plan. Mr. Ramos also appeared to have genuine remorse for the crimes he committed.

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Mr. Ramos' attorney made a strong argument for release of Mr. Ramos based on his demonstrated progress in prison related to his programming, behavior, related risk assessments, and the statutory release guidance for Long Term Juvenile Board cases.

JP:jas

September 30, 2019

October 14, 2019

October 22, 2019

cc: AHCC

Joel Ramos

Nancy Collins, Attorney

File

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
INDETERMINATE SENTENCE REVIEW BOARD
P.O. BOX 40907, OLYMPIA, WA 98504-0907

TO: Full Board

FROM: Jeff Patnode (jas)

RE: RAMOS, Joel, DOC #712229

Panel recommends: Find Mr. Ramos releasable.

Next action: Submit Offender Release Plan (ORP).

Agree

Disagree

Jeff Patnode 10-14-2019
Lori Ramsdell-Gilkey 10-14-2019
Elyse Balmert 10-14-2019
Kecia Rongen 10-14-2019