



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

**DECISION AND REASONS**

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NAME: FARRELL, Imogene  
DOC #: 963943  
FACILITY: Washington Correction Center for Women – WCCW  
TYPE OF HEARING: LT JUVBRD Hearing  
HEARING DATE: June 14, 2017  
PANEL MEMBERS: KR & EB  
FINAL DECISION DATE: June 26, 2017

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This matter came before Kecia Rongen and Elyse Balmert, who are members of the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB or the Board) on the above date for a release hearing in accordance with the provisions of RCW 9.94A.730. Ms. Farrell appeared in person and was represented by Federal Public Defender Jennifer Wellman and attorney Sherilyn Peterson. Testimony was provided by Department of Corrections (DOC) Classification Counselor (CC) Dairyene Wooten, and Ms. Farrell.

**BOARD DECISION:**

This was a Deferred Decision. Based on the burden of proof set out in RCW 9.94A.730(3) and the totality of evidence and information provided to the Board, the Board does not find by a preponderance of the evidence that Ms. Farrell is more likely than not to commit any new criminal law violations if released on conditions. Consequently, the Board finds Ms. Farrell releasable in 18 months upon her satisfactory completion of a transition through lower levels of custody that preferably includes a period of time in work release. The Board establishes a release date on or about December 15, 2018. The actual release date is contingent upon the approval of the Offender Release Plan (ORP) and the mandatory Law Enforcement Notification.

**NEXT ACTION:**

Submit an Offender Release Plan in October of 2018 for approval.

**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 after serving no less than 20 years of total confinement. Imogene Farrell's petition was accepted, which resulted in her hearing on this date.

Ms. Farrell is currently incarcerated for a February 20, 1990 conviction in Whatcom County Cause #89-8-00046-4 for Counts I and II – Murder in the First Degree. The time start is February 20, 1990. The court set the original confinement term at 798 months on each count, to be served concurrently, from a Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) range of 271 to 361 months on each count. The current minimum term is January 11, 2034 and the maximum confinement term would expire on September 1, 2055. Ms. Farrell has served approximately 328 months in prison and 354 days of jail time.

**NATURE OF INDEX OFFENSE(S):**

According to file material, on January 15, 1989, the bodies of an adult male, age 68, and an adult female, age 22, were found in their apartment. The victims were father and daughter and shared an apartment. The autopsy report estimated the time of the murder was in the early morning hours of January 14, 1989. The male victim had a steak knife sticking through the right side of his head near his temple and he had been holding a pillow in a manner of defending himself. The female victim had numerous lacerations to her skull and face area, and multiple knife wounds in her back. This victim was found naked with her legs spread open and a chicken egg inserted into her vagina, still visible. The autopsy report indicated both victims had consumed alcohol that evening. Ms. Imogene Ferrell was found guilty and convicted of the murders of both victims after a variety of witnesses placed her at the victim's residence early on the morning of January 14,

1989, and other witnesses reported her body and clothing were covered in blood a few hours after the murders.

**PRIOR CRIMINAL CONDUCT:**

Ms. Farrell was incarcerated for two years between 1985 and 1987 in a North Dakota juvenile correctional facility for running away, minor in possession, failing to obey a guardian, vandalism, disorderly conduct, and reckless driving. While the Board confirmed Ms. Farrell was at that facility during this period of time, the facility was unable to release any documents without the permission of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Ms. Farrell has reported she was 12 years old at the time of her first arrest.

**HISTORY/COMMENTS:**

Ms. Farrell's last hearing was held on April 15, 2015. She was found not releasable and the Board recommended she re-petition in June of 2016. The Board also recommended that she complete a chemical dependency program and other programming that would assist in preparation for her reentry into the community.

Since Ms. Farrell's last hearing, she has completed Moving On, Re-Entry Life Skills, Job Seeking Skills, and chemical dependency intensive out-patient treatment. She is currently working as a laundry worker and attending the College Readiness Course. She also has received several certificates of appreciation from her work around the prison. In addition, she has been involved in the Ted X program. Ms. Farrell is apparently very skilled as a florist. Native American Chaplain Jackie Martinson has reached out to CC Wooten to offer support for Ms. Farrell. She and her daughter have offered to help her with a release plan to include employment and to get to appointments. Ms. Farrell would like to transition through lower levels of custody if found releasable by the Board.

Ms. Farrell discussed the murders with the Board. She maintains that it was not her that committed the actual murders but that it was her much older boyfriend at the time. She alleges

that he was very abusive to her and others, including animals. She reports that it was his family and him that came up with the story that she committed the murders and because she was a juvenile, she would not go to prison but the juvenile facility and be out by the time she was 21. According to Ms. Farrell they also promised to provide her with an attorney which did not happen. She does not have any ill will about the fact that she has been in prison for murders that she didn't commit (according to her), she believes she should have come to prison and it likely saved her life.

According to a letter to the Board from Jennifer Wellman, Federal Public Defender, dated February 13, 2017, in October of 2015 it was discovered by the FBI that there were errors in the testimony on microscopic hair comparison that was given by the State's expert witness, an FBI Special Agent. There is currently an active case in the Washington Court of Appeals which eventually may result in a new trial for Ms. Farrell.

Ms. Farrell has a number of people in the community wishing to assist her with her transition back into the community. One is a sister and her sister's boyfriend who live in Utah and would like to move to Washington State if Ms. Farrell is found releasable. They both have jobs which may be transferrable to Washington State. A second one is Ms. Martinson who has contacts in the horticulture field. The last one is a former inmate who owns a floral shop in Tacoma and is willing to employ her.

**EVIDENCE CONSIDERED:**

In preparation for Ms. Farrell's hearing and its decision in this case, the Board completed a review of Ms. Farrell's Department of Corrections (DOC) and ISRB files. The Board considered all information contained in those files, including but not limited to: Information provided by the sentencing court/prosecutor; the most recent DOC facility plan; information regarding institutional behavior and programming; any letters of support and/or concerns sent to the Board; the Pre-Sentence Investigation report; and the Psychological Report completed by Dr. Deborah Wentworth. The Board also considered the testimony of the witnesses listed above.

A prosecutor recommendation from Whatcom County was received prior to her 2015 hearing recommended she not be released.

Letters of support for Ms. Farrell received from two survivors of the victims were submitted through Ms. Wellman, the Federal Public Defender.

**REASONS:**

The Board, through testimony and file review finds that Ms. Farrell is not more likely than not to commit a new crime if she satisfactorily completes conditions that are designed to help better prepare her for a successful re-entry into society. Ms. Farrell has been incarcerated for 27 years and has no prior experience of living independently as an adult. The Board acknowledges that Ms. Farrell has completed several offender change programs and has learned employment skills. The psychological evaluation completed prior to his hearing also stated Ms. Farrell would benefit from transition prior to full release. The Board would like to see how she manages lower levels of custody and increased responsibility, including work release.

As a result of this release decision, Ms. Farrell will come under the jurisdiction of the Board. The Board expects Ms. Farrell to demonstrate infraction free behavior and adhere to all elements of the re-entry/transition plan, especially any programs that address her risks and needs. If Ms. Farrell incurs a serious infraction, is demoted from a custody level, or returned to prison from work release, the Board shall have cause to hold a new hearing based on this new information to determine if she is still releasable.

Ms. Farrell was 17 at the time of the crimes. She was influenced and allegedly abused by a much older boyfriend and came from a chaotic childhood. While in no way does this excuse her crime, it appears as if Ms. Farrell has matured and recognizes how she needs to live her life differently. Ms. Farrell's risk assessments list her as a "low" risk to reoffend violently in the community and records documenting improved function and on maturation over time suggest that the overall

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risk could be viewed as more “very low to low” range. Ms. Farrell has support in the community to assist her in her transition. Her eventual release should have strong controls around the use of drugs and alcohol.

KR:ffo

June 26, 2017

cc: Institution – WCCW  
Imogene FARRELL  
File



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

DATE: June 26, 2017

TO: Full Board

FROM: KR & EB (Fawn Opp)

RE: FARRELL, Imogene / DOC # 963943

Panel recommends: Releasable in December 2018 after transitioning through lower levels of custody.

Next action: Submit ORP in October 2018

<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Elyse Balmert 6-26-2017 Lori Ramsdell-Gilkey 6-26-2017 Jeff Patnode 6-26-2017 Kecia Rongen 6-26-2017	