



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

DECISION AND REASONS

NAME: JONES, Melvin
DOC #: 623519
FACILITY: Airway Heights Corrections Center (AHCC)
TYPE OF HEARING: .100 Hearing
HEARING DATE: October 24, 2017
PANEL MEMBERS: KR & EB
FINAL DECISION DATE: November 6, 2017

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 9.95.100. Mr. Jones appeared in person and was represented by attorney George Marlton. Testimony was provided by Department of Corrections (DOC) Classification Counselor (CC) Michael Schaeffer, DOC Sex Offender Treatment and Assessment Program (SOTAP) Specialist Kristin Reiter, and Mr. Jones.

BOARD DECISION:

This was a Deferred Decision. Based on the requirements of RCW 9.95.009(3) and RCW 9.95.100 and the totality of evidence and information considered by the Board, the Board finds that Mr. Jones is not parolable and adds 48 months to his minimum term.

NEXT ACTION:

Schedule a .100 hearing 120 days prior to PERD. A new psychological evaluation will be required for his next hearing.

JURISDICTION:

Melvin Jones is under the jurisdiction of the Board on a December 10, 1976, conviction of Murder in the First Degree, Count II, under King County Cause #77622. His time start is February 24, 1981. His initial duration of confinement was set by the Board at 347 months. The standard range of the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) at the time was 250 to 333 months. His maximum term is Life. To date Mr. Jones has served approximately 496 months.

NATURE OF INDEX OFFENSE(S):

File materials describe the underlying Murder as occurring in 1976, and it involved the rape and murder of a young woman in King county. The offense involved the strangulation of an adult female found spread eagle on the floor of her apartment in a bathrobe and having been strangled with the cord of the bathrobe. Mr. Jones' palm print was found on the wall. A large plant had been ripped out of a pot and draped over her body. Numerous items of physical evidence were found on the scene, and Mr. Jones failed a polygraph. He claimed he had been at the victim's apartment with her boyfriend partying some three weeks prior to the murder. Mr. Jones continues to deny this offense.

Mr. Jones has previously been convicted in 1969 of Indecent Liberties involving a known five year old female. He was described as a close family friend, and the girl told her mother that Mr. Jones had taken her to some nearby woods and molested her. She was bleeding from her vaginal area and semen was found on her underpants. He served approximately six years and was on parole for some ten months when he was convicted of the instant offense. This conviction reached the maximum expiration date in 1989.

PRIOR CRIMINAL CONDUCT:

Mr. Jones was found not guilty at the trial of a second murder that occurred some weeks prior to the instant offense and had striking similarities to the instant offense, wherein his palm print was also found at the scene. This woman was also known to Mr. Jones.

While being evaluated for participation in the Sexual Psychopath Program Mr. Jones admitted to a number of other sexual assaults, and he now indicates that he fabricated all of these stories to help him in his attempt to be admitted into the Sexual Psychopath Program.

Mr. Jones has a juvenile history beginning at age 12, with his first institutional commitment at age 13. From 1965 until his first prison commitment, he continued antisocial activities that repeatedly brought him to the attention of the authorities.

HISTORY/COMMENTS:

Mr. Jones' last hearing with the Board was on August 12, 2014, and he was found not parolable and 60 months were added to his minimum term. The Board recommended that Mr. Jones remain infraction free and reapply to SOTAP if he was ready to admit his crimes.

Since the Board's last hearing, Mr. Jones has participated in SOTAP, Job Seeking Skills, Makin' It Work, and Chemical Dependency. Mr. Jones continues to deny his index offense of murder, however does now admit to the sex offense against the five year old child. He indicated the reason why he committed the crime was that he was "just curious" about the victim's vagina. He described that he was asked to babysit her that night, and he had recently gotten out of juvenile custody and lacked relationships with peer age females. He identified his high risks as: drugs, secret keeping, and not having support people. Mr. Jones has learned to stop and think before acting and to use his support people for help.

Mr. Jones still maintains his innocence for his index offense of Murder. His palm print was found at the scene, and he explains that by saying he had been at the apartment days or weeks earlier. He has no idea how someone would have placed him at the scene of the crime.

Psychology Associate Ms. Reiter, who was also his former SOTAP Specialist, testified that he put forth good effort in treatment. He has been candid about his behavior in prison and has worked to turn that around. In his SOTAP Summary he is described as making "adequate progress"

toward his dynamic-risk based treatment goals. Ms. Reiter indicated that the Skill Building Unit at Shelton would be helpful for Mr. Jones in obtaining basic skills.

Dr. Johnson completed a psychological evaluation on Mr. Jones in May of 2017. He assessed Mr. Jones on the VRAG in the Risk Category “9” of the 9 categories identified, and at a 76% and 87% chance of reoffending at an average of five and 12 years respectively. On the SAPROF, which reviews protective/dynamic factors, Mr. Jones was assessed as moderate-high, and his overall risk is viewed as moderate when you combine both scores. On the PCL-R, Dr. Johnson assessed Mr. Jones as being in the “medium PCL-R group.” This means that these individuals are seen as “having a moderate level of features that might reflect an added risk of reoffending.”

INFORMATION CONSIDERED:

In preparation for Mr. Jones’ hearing and its decision in this case, the Board completed a review of his ISRB file. The Board considered all information contained in that file, including but not limited to: 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 evaluation prepared by Dr. James Johnson dated May 15, 2017. The Board also considered the testimony of the witnesses listed above.

The original recommendation from the Judge and Prosecutor was Life.

REASONS:

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 9.95.009(3) and RCW 9.95.100 the Board finds Mr. Jones not parolable at this time.

The Board recognizes Mr. Jones' efforts in taking responsibility for the indecent liberties conviction and completing the SOTAP. However one must question his motive since he has denied this conviction, as well as the murder conviction, up until he entered SOTAP. The Board recognizes that his motive is likely to get out of prison. It is important that Mr. Jones not only take responsibility for his crime, but offer some insight into this offending behavior, which appears to be lacking at this time. Mr. Jones also has been assessed as a moderate risk to reoffend when you combine both risk and protective factors. The Board recommends that Mr. Jones complete Bridges to Life and be placed in the Skill Building Unit at WCC (Washington Corrections Center) to assist with increasing his life skills.

KR:jas

November 3, 2017

November 6, 2017

November 15, 2017

cc: Institution
Melvin Jones
File
George Marlton, Attorney



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

DATE: November 3, 2017

TO: Full Board

FROM: KR & EB (Jody)

RE: JONES, Melvin DOC #623519

Panel recommends: Find Mr. Jones not parolable and add 48 months to his minimum term.

Next action: Schedule .100 hearing 120 days prior to PERD.

Agree	Disagree
Elyse Balmert 11-6-2017 Lori Ramsdell-Gilkey 11-6-2017 Jeff Patnode 11-6-2017 Kecia Rongen 11-6-2017	