

Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020

Review

The Commissioners met at 9:01 a.m. to review legal issues and pending or future action items and correspondence. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jon Kochis, Lt. Marc Churchill, Tom Lininger, Joshua Horacek, Heather O'Keefe, Aunie Cordle, Martin Barker, Juli Barker, Dave Henwood, Johanna Pearce, . Attending virtually were Chris Wagner, David Miller, Dennis Keller, Stephanie Fyffe, Jeff Barron, Jeff Porter, Tony Vogel, Dave Burgei, Jim Bahnsen, Jon Slater, Alex Lape, and other virtual participants.

- **Welcome**

Commissioner Davis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- **COVID-19 Update**

Jon Kochis, EMA Director, shared an update on the COVID-19 responses. Fairfield County is still 'orange' in the advisory system.

Mr. Kochis stated the weekend number spike was due to one facility having issues. More PPE is available meeting everyone's needs. The flu clinic was very successful and is a good sign for when the COVID vaccine is available.

Ms. Fyffe reported there was a lot of feedback from the flu clinic. There was a large number of cases diagnosed over the weekend (165), and today's numbers for new cases is down to 17. Part of the swing in the numbers is from a nursing home that had 40 positive cases over the weekend. Ms. Fyffe stated there are currently two schools in the county that are 100% virtual at this time.

Mr. Levacy asked which two schools were virtual.

Ms. Fyffe replied it was Liberty Union and Walnut Township.

Governor DeWine unveiled a **new advertisement** that will begin airing across the state to serve as a visual reminder of how quickly COVID-19 can domino out of control. Dr. Brown shared this advertisement to amplify its important message.

- **Legal Update**

Mr. Horacek reported there was no legal update.

- **CARES Act Funds**

Dr. Brown reported there would be a resolution again today to account for eligible expenses. We do expect a few more resolutions for the CARES Act. The resolution for today was reviewed and accepted for the voting agenda.

In addition, a subgrant with MCJDC was administratively approved. Templates were provided to MCJDC to prepare packets for each member county. The MCJDC Joint Board will need to meet to approve the subgrants for each member county. Fairfield County has a placeholder for another subgrant to MCJDC for public safety payroll support if additional resources become available. MCJDC has an idea about some equipment and building upgrades but has not identified a cost just yet.

Commissioner Davis indicated the model for the public safety payroll support might be helpful to a jail consortium that Perry County participates in, and he was able to connect with Perry County representatives at the CFLP meeting. They were amenable to the

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020**

shared approach for the MCJDC. Licking County has already been notified, and it was thought that Hocking County would also be supportive.

From a state perspective CARES Act funds were allocated by the Controlling Board for various purposes. Community Actions will receive funds to help with rent and utility assistance (and we can serve as communication partners). Rural hospitals also received funding. Small business relief grants and bar/restaurant assistance grants are also available through the state. The website for these grants is www.businesshelp.ohio.gov

Regarding the subgrants for FMC from our CARES Act funds, all agreements have been fully executed, and we have received additional confirmation that orders are expected to be filled prior to December 30, 2020. Mr. Janoso and others have expressed appreciation for the support of efforts to fight the pandemic.

- Administration and Budget Update/Carri's List

- a. Announcements & Date Reminders

- Announcements

- Anyone can email or text a question anytime:
Carri.Brown@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov or (740) 777-8552

- Date Reminders

- November 11 – Veterans Day

- November 12 – Virtual Roundtable

- November 26, 27 – Thanksgiving Holiday

- Thursday, December 3 – Viewing Day – with the County Engineer**

- b. Highlights of Resolutions

Dr. Brown highlighted the resolutions. There were 14 resolutions for the voting meeting.

We had a proclamation for foster care and adoption awareness.

There were 13 *financial and grant related resolutions* to approve:

- An account to account transfer of appropriations to properly classify interest, and a resolution to credit various agency funds with interest for Septembers;
- Repayment of an advance by Juvenile Court;
- CARES Act accounting and approval of eligible expenses;
- Appropriations for an Engineer's project, JFS, and Utilities (four resolutions);
- Two resolutions for memo transactions for JFS;
- An allocation to support the Law Library;
- A fund to fund transfer of appropriations for EMA; and
- An account to account transfer of appropriations for DD.

In queue, there were financial and contracting resolutions at various stages of progress.

On Thursday of this week, we will propose the reappointments for the volunteer peace officers dependents board. We will also potentially have a financial resolution and one to set viewing and hearing dates as needed.

- c. Administrative Approvals, Program, & Budget Update

Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020

Administrative Approvals and Update

The review packet contained a list of administrative approvals.

A subgrant with MCJDC was approved.

The minor Workforce Center lease was approved, following the RFP process.

Budget Update

Total August sales tax revenues, with the estimated non-auto sales of \$453,815, will be about 6% above the August sales tax of 2019. We have projected a 3% increase in the most recent version of the planning tool for 2021.

For the general fund budget for 2021, the expected expenditures (about 95% of appropriations) are aligned with the projected actual revenues. We plan to examine a comprehensive technology plan for mid-year appropriations. We also await information about the costs for the Sheriff's firing and training range.

The all funds budget is projected to be around \$190 million.

There are budget hearings scheduled for Thursday this week for these departments:

Treasurer, Coroner, Clerk of Courts, Engineer, Auditor, GIS, Real Estate Assessment, IT, Municipal Court Judges, Veteran Services Commission, Soil and Water Conservation District, Municipal Court Clerk, and Common Pleas Court.

d. BRAVOS

BRAVO for the tremendous cooperation and planning for the budget hearings this year!

From Mandi Crist to Tammy Smith: "I just wanted to give a shout out to Tammy Smith for super quick response times for the Visitation Center. Since re-opening in June, we are in constant need of cleaning supplies and other items. All of us at the Visitation Center are responsible for cleaning and sanitizing all games, toys, tables, etc. after each direct service. Sometimes, we need things very last minute, and Tammy always helps us."

Pharmacy rebates are making a difference for the health benefits plan. Jeff Porter negotiated rebates that resulted in more than \$100,000 for the program this year.

Thanks to Rachel McCoy and Dennis Keller and all the environmental stewardship committee and those who participated in raising plastic caps for recycling. More than 1200# were collected, and the benches (in exchange for the caps) have been received.

- Old Business

- a. Commissioner Communications

Commissioner Davis updated everyone on the CFLP meeting. There could be some revenue and expense issues on the horizon for CFLP that will need to be sorted through. This may be pandemic related in terms of a drop in revenue.

- b. Early Voting Numbers

Mr. Davis reported as of last night 21,000 absentee ballots have been received, and 15,000 had voted early in person. He said feedback about the voting experience has been great.

586

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020**

Mr. Fix stated those high numbers are also reflected in statewide and nationwide numbers.

c. MARCS Tower

Mr. Levacy reported the MARCS Tower is almost completely installed.

- New Business

- General Correspondence Received

- a. Liquor Permit for Buckeye Beach Park – Sent to Sheriff for comment

Lt. Churchill reported that the area raises some concerns. Chief Lape would like to have further discussion and provide additional information. Joshua Horacek will provide a short memo on the process for requesting a hearing and/or providing information to the state permitting agency.

- Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- FYI

- a. Jail Population – 245
- b. Thank you notes from JFS CSEA and Fairfield County Fair
- c. Memo from County Auditor re: Lot Split Changes
- d. DACO Exhibits and Events
- e. Pickerington Planning and Zoning Commission Notice of Public Hearing – November 10th at 7:30 p.m.
- f. Public records requests can be made to Rachel.Elsea@fairfieldcountyohio.gov or Carri.Brown@fairfieldcountyohio.gov

- Open Items (none)

United Way Update

The Commissioners met at 9:26 a.m. for an update from United Way. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jon Kochis, Lt. Marc Churchill, Tom Lininger, Joshua Horacek, Heather O'Keefe, Aunie Cordle, Martin Barker, Juli Barker, Dave Henwood, Ray Stemen, and Johanna Pearce. Attending virtually were Chris Wagner, David Miller, Dennis Keller, Stephanie Fyffe, Jeff Barron, Jeff Porter, Tony Vogel, Dave Burgei, Jim Bahnsen, Jon Slater, Alex Lape, Scott Reed, Beth Craft, and Diana Steckman.

Scott Reed and Beth Craft updated everyone on the Fairfield County United Way campaign.

Mr. Reed thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to speak to the leadership of the County. He stated the county is the largest workplace campaign in the county -and second largest campaign overall. There are Fairfield County residents in Franklin County who designate back to Fairfield County.

He asked if there were any questions about the resources available to assist in running the campaigns.

Mr. Levacy asked what the preliminary numbers looked like.

Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020

Mr. Reed replied it is very early on in the campaign. He said they will not have good sense until mid- to late-November. Collections from past pledges are down roughly 12%.

Mr. Levacy offered to be helpful in any way needed.

Mr. Fix thanked Mr. Reed for all the work United Way does to help Fairfield County residents.

Dr. Brown asked if it would help to have everyone empty spare change from their desks since the annual fundraiser cannot happen this year, holding a distanced event that would be similar to "coins in a fountain" without putting coins in a fountain.

Mr. Reed replied that would be great because every little bit helps.

Adoption and Foster Month Update

The Commissioners met at 9:32 a.m. for an update on Adoption Month. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jon Kochis, Lt. Marc Churchill, Tom Lininger, Joshua Horacek, Heather O'Keefe, Aunie Cordle, Martin Barker, Juli Barker, Dave Henwood, Ray Stemen, and Johanna Pearce.

Attending virtually were Jim Bahnsen, Chris Wagner, Dave Burgei, David Miller, Dennis Keller, Diana Steckman, Stephanie Fyffe, Jeff Barron, Jeff Porter, Jon Slater, and Tony Vogel.

We reviewed the proclamation for Adoption Awareness (and Adoption/Foster Care Appreciation) and introduced the "Foster the Future" Campaign. We watched a six-minute video and introduced a mural concept for 2021. The attached information was also presented.

Ms. O'Keefe reviewed funding and grant items. Mr. Henwood reviewed the origin and purpose of the new "Foster the Future" campaign.

In addition, HB 8 was recently signed by Governor DeWine. The legislation allows for modernized training methods for foster parents and removes barriers to becoming a foster parent. Fairfield County foster parent Teri Devoe was featured in the media presentation of Governor DeWine's signing of HB 8.

Also, later in the day at 2:15 pm, representatives from the Office of National Drug Control will be in Lancaster, Ohio. They will meet at 2:15 pm at JFS. Dr. Brown will attend virtually. They will be reviewing the Ohio START program. (Everyone will recall the video from the 2019 state of the county address.) Fairfield County is often featured for the Ohio START program.

Mr. Davis asked how quickly a prospective foster parent can be licensed under the new legislation.

Ms. O'Keefe replied that historically, training was six weeks alone and HB 8 shortened that. ODJFS is still looking at how to provide those trainings virtually. Unfortunately, they are still limited in the number of times they can offer the training. She believes it could be as short as 90 days for full certification, which includes home assessments.

Mr. Davis asked if there were children on a waiting list.

Ms. O'Keefe replied there were about 44 as of the end of August who are in custody and awaiting adoption.

Mr. Davis asked if those children are classified by the needs the children have.

Ms. O'Keefe replied most of the children would qualify by the state's definition of having special needs. Sibling groups that they would like to keep together qualify as having special needs, for example. A large majority of the kids (25-30 of them) are 15-17 years old.

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020**

Mr. Davis asked about the 25-30 older children. He asked what the economics were from the agency's standpoint.

Ms. O'Keefe replied it works differently from placement to adoption. She stated that the per diem paid for foster parents is \$15 a day for under 13 and \$20 per day for 13 and over children. She added that Fairfield County could be doing much better with the per diems. Those adopting older children may qualify for additional adoption assistance.

Mr. Davis applauded the marketing for the "Foster the Future" campaign. He believes the campaign has a bright future.

Ms. O'Keefe and Ms. Cordle spoke to the creation of the campaign.

Mr. Barker stated it was an honor to be able to work on the project with the county.

Mr. Levacy mentioned how much he missed the foster parent recognition event due to the pandemic. He is embarrassed how low the county's per diem is at this time. He also spoke of Dave Thomas' passion for adoption.

Mr. Fix congratulated JFS on the campaign. He noted that his family adopted his sister when she was just two weeks old. He asked if foster parents typically transition into adoptive parents or if they are separate groups of people.

Mr. Henwood reviewed how the program works in Fairfield County. He said there all types of families – and some people serve as foster parents when needed. Others do transition to adoptive parents.

Mr. Fix asked how many families were needed to meet the needs and have all children placed.

Mr. Henwood replied that having 60-70 families that could meet various needs would be ideal.

Mr. Fix asked how much lower the per diem was as compared to other agencies and if the rate was to increase what the total cost would be for that increase.

Ms. O'Keefe replied they do not have the exact numbers and are worried how it would impact the longevity of the levy funding with long term placement costs. The agency is balancing its overall needs and resources.

Mr. Fix replied he would like to learn more about those numbers in the future.

Commissioner Levacy presented the group with a proclamation recognizing November as Adoption and Foster Care Month.

Mr. Davis thanked everyone for their work.

Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, October 27, 2020, beginning at 10:01 a.m., with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jon Kochis, Joshua Horacek, Tom Lininger, Ray Stemen, Lt. Marc Churchill, Aunie Cordle, Heather O'Keefe, Dave Henwood, and Johanna Pearce. Joining via teleconference were Jim Bahnsen, Chris Wagner, David Miller, Dennis Keller, Stephanie Fyffe, Jeff Porter, Jon Slater, and Tony Vogel.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Davis led everyone in the pledge of allegiance.

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020**

Announcements

Commissioner Davis asked if there were any announcements.

Public Comment

Commissioner Davis asked if anyone from the public who would like to speak or offer comments.

Mr. Ray Stemen of 2444 West Point Road in Lancaster stated that he and his wife tried to be foster parents in the mid-1970s. He stated the work then compared to the work now is like night and day. They did not have any help or training in the 1970s. Everything they are doing today is much better for the kids.

Approval of Minutes for Thursday, October 22, 2020

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for the Thursday, October 22, 2020 Regular Meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Steve Davis, Dave Levacy, and Jeff Fix

Approval of the Commissioners' Resolutions

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following Commissioners' Office resolutions:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 2020-10.27.a | A resolution authorizing the approval of a proclamation. [Commissioners] |
| 2020-10.27.b | A resolution to approve a memo expense for interest allocation reimbursements for Fairfield Department of Health, Fairfield County Parks, Fairfield County Port Authority, & Coronavirus Relief Distribution – Fund #7012, #7321, #7308, #7865, & 7869 – Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |
| 2020-10.27.c | A resolution authorizing an account to account transfer into a major expenditure object category & fund to fund transfer for an allocation for the Law Library Board - Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |
| 2020-10.27.d | A resolution approving appropriate from unappropriated & account to account transfers in major object expense categories and memo transactions relating to the CARES Act Relief Fund# 2868, and approving the uses of such funds – Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |
| 2020-10.27.e | A resolution approving an account to account transfer into a major expenditure object category – Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

Approval of the Board of Developmental Disabilities Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Board of Developmental Disabilities resolution approving an account to account transfer; see resolution 2020-10.27.f.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020**

Approval of the Emergency Management Agency Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Emergency Management Agency resolution authorizing an EMA fund to fund transfer; see resolution 2020-10.27.g.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

Approval of the Engineer's Office Resolutions

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Engineer's Office resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024 – Motor Vehicle for employee reimbursement; see resolution 2020-10.27.h.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

Approval of the JFS Resolutions

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following JFS resolutions:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 2020-10.27.i | A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Sub Fund 8056 reimbursing Fund 2018 [JFS] |
| 2020-10.27.j | A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Fund WIOA 2599 reimbursing Fund 2018 [JFS] |
| 2020-10.27.k | A resolution to approve additional appropriations by appropriating from unappropriated into a major expense object category – Fund # 2599 – Workforce Fund - Fairfield County JFS [JFS] |

Discussion: Returning to the JFS marketing materials, Mr. Davis asked about the distribution of the materials. He asked when the campaign would be live. Ms. Cordle replied she hopes for the program to be live next week.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

Approval of the Juvenile/Probate Court Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Juvenile/Probate Court resolution authorizing the approval of repayment of an advance to the General Fund from Fund #2865 Child Abuse & Neglect Discretionary Fund (QIC); see resolution 2020-10.27.l.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

Approval of the Utilities Resolutions

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following Utilities resolutions:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 2020-10.27.m | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category Utilities Fund 5044 Sewer Admin[Utilities] [Utilities] |
| 2020-10.27.n | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure |

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 27, 2020**

object category Utilities Fund 5046 Water Admin[Utilities] [Utilities]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

Open Items

Dr. Brown suggested the Commission thank foster and adoptive parents in a personal way by sending a card to each of our county's foster and adoptive parents during November in honor of the National Awareness Month. She requested a current roster of parents. The Commissioners thought this was a great idea.

Adjournment

With no further business, on the motion of Jeff Fix and a second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:45 a.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, Dave Levacy and Steve Davis

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Motion by: _____ Seconded by: _____
that the October 27, 2020 minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS: NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

*Approved on October 29, 2020


Steven A. Davis
Commissioner


Dave Levacy
Commissioner


Jeff Eix
Commissioner


Rachel A Elsea, Clerk

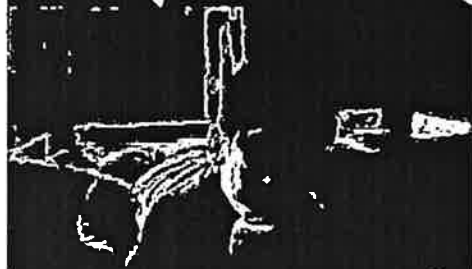
Figure 1. (a) Schematic diagram of the experimental setup. (b) Photograph of the experimental setup.



(a) Schematic diagram of the experimental setup. (b) Photograph of the experimental setup.



Meet Elijah and Kurtis



Youth Name:
Kurtis Woltz

DOB:
2/23/2012

Entered Agency Custody:
8/2/2017

Agency Received PC:
8/8/2018

Current Placement:
Therapeutic Foster Home

Meet Kurtis:

Kurtis is a future engineer! Kurtis loves to build intricate structures with his legos, which are well beyond his normal age capability. He utilizes legos, train tracks, blocks, playdoh, or anything available to create cities, animals, and stories. Kurtis is a fast learner. He is determined to do well in school academically and behaviorally he tries very hard. Kurtis is learning to play well with his peers. This sweet little guy has an active imagination and is very curious about the world around him.

These boys have been placed together for some time in network care. They came into care with significant behaviors but have stabilized and improved over time. Elijah has significant delays and receives services from Fairfield Board of Developmental Disabilities. He is verbal but can be difficult to understand. It is likely he will require a lifetime of care. Kurtis functions at a higher-level.

Desired Family

Kurtis and Elijah are brothers and should be adopted together. Elijah and Kurtis need a family with a strong support system, who would be willing to work with service providers to address both of their needs. It would be wonderful if the family were active in their community because Kurtis and Elijah love to participate in Boy Scouts, and they would like to



Fairfield County
Job & Family
Services

239 W. Main St., Lancaster, Ohio 43130
fcjfs.org • 740-652-7889



Youth Name:
Elijah Woltz

DOB:
2/5/2010

Entered Agency Custody:
8/2/2017

Agency Received PC:
8/8/2018

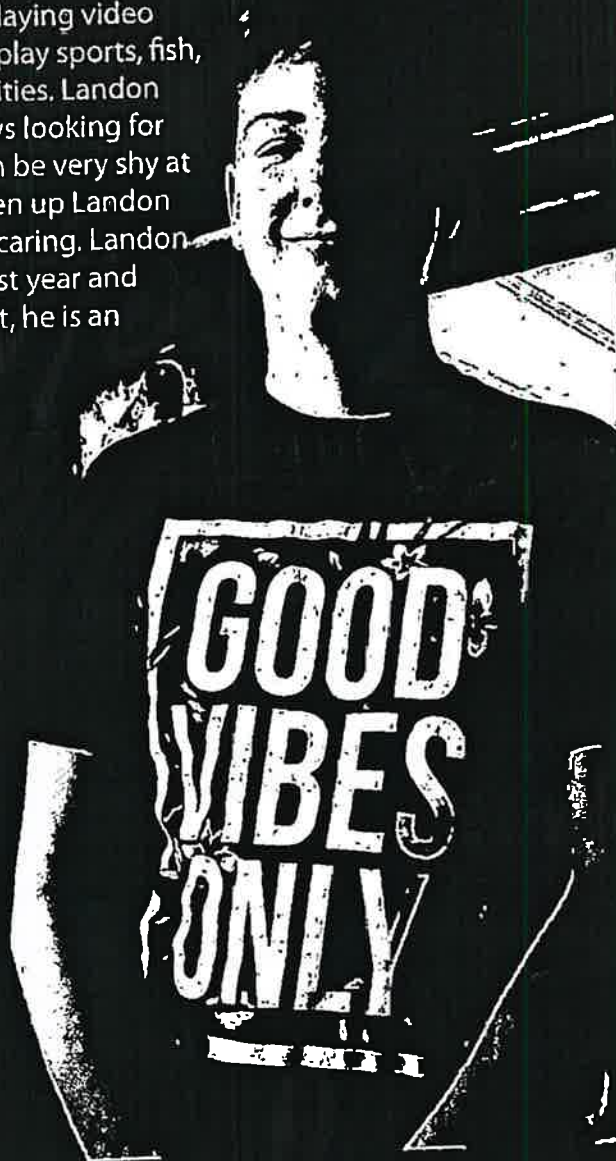
Current Placement:
Therapeutic Foster Home

Meet Elijah:

Elijah is a loving, playful and affectionate child. What Elijah can't communicate in words, he shows by leaning on his caregivers with hugs and smiles. If Elijah needs help, he'll stick out his hand. Elijah loves to be around and play with other kids and he especially loves sensory stimulating toys like playdoh, books and water.

Meet Landon

Landon has an older brother who he is very close to. Landon loves playing video games. Landon also loves to play sports, fish, hike and other outdoor activities. Landon likes to be active and is always looking for something to do. Landon can be very shy at first but once he starts to open up Landon is very funny, insightful, and caring. Landon has matured a lot over the last year and when he sets his mind to it, he is an A/B student.



Youth Name:
Landon Prior

DOB:
12/13/2004

Entered Agency Custody:
12/18/2018

Agency Received PC:
5/10/2019

Current Placement:
Therapeutic Foster Home

About Landon:

Landon was a prior adoptee. He struggles to follow household rules, but not significantly. He has been affected by his older brother's recent adoption. He is likely a victim of his older brother and has been reluctant to disclose. He has a strong desire to be adopted again.

Desired Family

Landon's forever family would be patient and active. The family would have a strong structure in the home to help Landon stay on track and have patience enough to help Landon find his way back to doing the right thing! The family should have experience working with community providers. Landon needs a family that will be there for him through all the good times and a family that will stay stick with him during the bad times. As mentioned above, Landon has an older brother and it would be important for Landon's forever family to help Landon stay connected with him.



239 W. Main St.
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
fcjfs.org • 740-652-7889



Meet Alexander

Youth Name:
Alexander Long

DOB:
6/26/2009

Entered Agency Custody:
4/29/2019

Agency Received PC:
3/5/2020

Current Placement:
Residential – planning to look
for step-down



Desired Family

Alexander has some behavior issues. He has been increasingly improving. He was recently diagnosed with Graves Disease. Graves Disease is an autoimmune disorder that causes hyperthyroidism, or overactive thyroid. With this disease, your immune system attacks the thyroid and causes it to make more thyroid hormone than your body needs. Providers believe that the chemical imbalance caused by Graves may have contributed to his behaviors. Medications to treat the disease have helped his behaviors. He very much wants to be adopted. Has had a previous adoption which was dissolved.



239 W. Main St.
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
fcjfs.org • 740-652-7889



who we are



FAIRFIELD COUNTY PROTECTIVE SERVICES is a department within Fairfield County Job & Family Services. Protective Services cares for, and protects, children, teens, and the elderly, in our county. It is funded by a combination of local, state, and federal dollars, as well as a levy passed by supportive voters of Fairfield County.

Most of the children and teens we work with remain with their parents while we wrap services around their family, and they have no need for foster care. Only when the situation becomes unsafe, does the child or teen enter out-of-home care. Then, the agency works to help children and teens have a safe and healthy place to live while also being surrounded by adults who love and support them. Out-of-home care can be with kin or foster care. When a child or teen must leave his/her home temporarily, the agency works to provide the most meaningful services to them and their family. To accomplish this, collaborative partnerships with organizations and social service providers are imperative. While the agency utilizes a variety of services, the goal is the same: assuring children and teens return to their parents as quickly as possible when it is safe for them to do so, or finding other family members or kin, when they are unable to return to parents.

While adoptions still occur each year, it is a small percentage compared to the children who remain with parents receiving supportive services, or who return to their family's care, or go live with kin. The number one goal for any child who has entered custody of the agency is to work toward reunification with his/her



parents, as soon as it is safe to do so. As a foster parent, you will be part of that goal! Your understanding of the importance of family and connections will be vital as we work to find kinship placement for any child or teen who enters foster care, until they can return to be with their parents or caregivers. Foster care is meant to be temporary.

As a foster parent, you will be asked to work alongside birth parents while temporarily caring for their child or teen. You will interact with birth parents in meetings held at the agency, and sometimes with parents outside of the agency at doctor appointments, school meetings or functions, recreational opportunities, and more. The agency will provide support in the form of training and a strong team to support you: a worker assigned to the

foster or adoptive family, and a worker assigned to the child or teen, and their family. Additionally, there will be a Guardian-Ad-Litem (GAL) to represent the child's best interests to the court, often an attorney representing the child, an Independent Living (IL) Worker for teens, sometimes a mental health therapist, and other individuals as needed.

As a foster parent or adoptive parent, you are an essential part of caring for children and teens and helping to bring healing to them and their families. Your communication and collaboration as part of a team working with the child or teen and his/her family is essential. You will have the opportunity to be part of the healing process for a child or teen, and his/her family.

Being a foster parent is truly **Fostering the Future.**

licensing and approval process

FAIRFIELD COUNTY PROTECTIVE SERVICES recognizes your desire to learn more about becoming a foster or foster care/adoptive parent. It is a serious commitment. Our agency will make every effort possible to assure all applicants are caring, competent and confident, in the role of caring for children and teens who need temporary care until returning to their parents, family, or kin. While some need adopted, the majority return home or stay with relatives or kin.

INQUIRY

Families or individuals interested in becoming a foster or foster care/adoptive parent should contact Protective Services at 740-652-7887 and ask to speak with someone on the foster care team. A complete information packet will be mailed to you after a social worker obtains basic information such as:

- Name
- Address
- Members of Household
- Contact Information, including e-mail
- Interest and motivation for foster care or foster care/adoption.

SELF - EVALUATION

Review this packet carefully and discuss your interest with those closest to you. Do all household members meet the minimum criteria for foster parenting? Applicants must meet the following basic requirements:

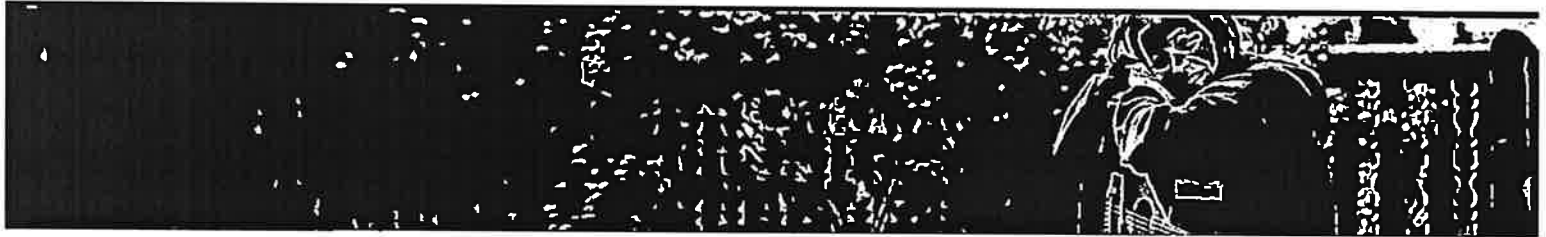
- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Have enough income to meet your basic needs and those of the family.
- Be in good physical condition and capable of caring for a child or teen.
- Meet bed and space requirements.
- Meet criminal records check criteria for anyone living in the home who is 18 years old or older. Records checks will include local law enforcement jurisdictions, BCII, and FBI reviews. History of child welfare involvement will also be sought, in addition to a sex offender registry check.
- Meet safety standards in the foster or foster care/adoptive home. Please talk with an agency representative about these standards.

The most important thing is your commitment to any child or teen in your care. The participation of all family members in welcoming, nurturing, caring, and supporting a child or teen placed in your home really does make a difference in a child's or teen's life. Additionally, you must be willing to work with the child or teen's birth family toward the goal of reunification and/or placement with other family members or kin.

APPLICATION

Your completed application may be dropped off, or mailed to Fairfield County Job and Family Services. You may also scan and e-mail your completed application to a member of the foster care and adoption team. Upon receipt, the application will be reviewed by a team member.

- All applicants must take care to be totally honest and complete all sections of the application.
- If you need assistance in completing the application, please speak with a foster care and adoption team member. *We will be glad to help!*



PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

Every applicant must complete pre-service training which is offered free of charge. It is hoped families will complete training prior to applying and beginning the home study as it is helpful in determining if foster care or foster care/adoption is right for you and your family. This thought-provoking training provides basic, vital knowledge about:

- General foster care and adoption issues
- Agency policies and practice
- Role of foster and foster care/adoption families on the child welfare team
- Understanding the impact of abuse and neglect on children and teens
- Unique needs of children and teens in foster care or available for adoption
- Specialized trauma informed parenting skills for those fostering or foster care/adopting

FAMILY ASSESSMENT *(also called Home Study)*

A caseworker, called an *assessor*, will be assigned to work with your family to complete the home assessment. This is a mutual process between the assessor and the family and helps to determine the child or teen most suited to be placed in your home. The family home assessment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Family dynamics, strengths, and challenges
- Family values
- Parenting Styles
- Interviews of everyone living in the home
- Fire inspection
- Well test, if applicable
- Safety audit
- Medical examinations and vaccination history for all household members
- Reference checks
- Financial records review
- Completion and collection of necessary documents
- Background checks (local law enforcement, BCII, FBI, child welfare history, sex offender registry)

CERTIFICATION FOR FOSTER CARE AND APPROVAL FOR ADOPTION

At the conclusion of the family home assessment, a recommendation regarding the approval or denial of your family for foster care or adoption will be made. Any family being denied will be informed of the reasons and right to have a county conference. Foster parents receive licenses from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services at the recommendation by Fairfield County Protective Services and adoptive parents are approved by Fairfield County.

foster and adoptive parenting

PREPARING TO PARENT

Once licensed and approved as a foster or foster care/adoption family, you will be assigned a foster care and adoption caseworker, also called an assessor from Fairfield County Protective Services. This worker will:

- Assist you in maintaining your license and approval as a foster or foster care/adoptive home
- Work in conjunction with the child's assigned caseworker
- Provide support to you as needed

Before a child or teen enters your home, a team of social workers and supervisors meet to make the placement decision. This consultation helps to evaluate a child or teen's unique needs, as well as the family ability to meet those needs. Prior to placement:

- All known information about the child/teen is provided to the foster or foster care/adoptive family
- Information regarding board and care rates and/or adoption subsidies will be presented
- Every family has the right to decline a placement if you do not believe it is the right fit for your family.
- Protective Services complies with the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA), the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as it applies to foster care and the foster care/adoption process. For more information about this, please go to www.fcjfs.org.

PLACEMENT

The following occurs during the placement period:

- Placements may last anywhere from hours to more than a year. Most children/teens successfully return to their parent or caregiver.
- The minimum time a child/teen must reside in your home to be adopted is six months. However, the finalization of most adoptions once a child/teen is in the permanent custody of the agency usually takes less than a year. Please note, just because a child/teen is placed in your home for six months or more, does not mean you will be able to adopt that child/teen.
- The child/teen's caseworker will make monthly visits to your home. This worker is responsible for case planning and family engagement with the child/teen and his/her family.
- You will receive invitations to participate in team meetings of all kinds, appointments, and other opportunities to be involved in the planning for the child/teen.
- The foster care worker will be a resource for you throughout the placement of the child until reunification occurs, another permanent plan is identified, or the child is adopted.
- The foster and foster care/adoptive parents will be assigned a foster care worker who will have regular contact to monitor foster care licensure compliance and progress, and adoption approval matters.

completing the adoption process

FINALIZATION

For those adopting a child, finalization is the term used by child welfare, Probate Court, and the foster care and adoption workers to indicate successful completion of the adoption journey. Finalization occurs when the Probate Court approves the adoption.

PRE-FINALIZATION

- Prior to preparing documents for Probate Court, the agency will meet with the adoptive family to share background information, discuss potential adoption subsidy, and services needed at the present time and into the future.
- The adoption worker will prepare paperwork for the Probate Court (Pre-Finalization Assessment Report) and will work with your adoption attorney to obtain a court date for the adoption.
- The adoption worker will accompany you to court on the adoption day and will provide court testimony about the progress of children in your home.

POST-FINALIZATION

- Information and referral, post adoption counseling, and other available services are offered to families at any point after finalization.
- Families formed by adoption are welcome to continue to be part of training, events, support group and more, after finalization.



why foster teens

EVERYONE, even teens, need to feel special, wanted, and needed. Providing a stable and supportive foster family environment increases a teen's hope for the future and builds self-esteem and confidence. It has been said that every teen is just one adult away from becoming a success story. *You can be that adult!* The agency works with amazing teens who need a strong, encouraging family to help them fulfill their potential.

Imagine teaching life skills with the benefit of your own lived experience. Think of opportunities to share activities with a teen you both will enjoy. Together, you will experience many *firsts* others may take for granted. On the cusp of becoming young adults, adolescents need guidance, support, encouragement, and hope. The relationship you develop with a teen will change a life, and it may just be yours.

Bottom line, you never outgrow the need for a family! Who believed in you as a teen when no one else did? Who never let you down when you were a teen? Who saw your potential? There are teens in the custody of Fairfield County Protective Services needing your help. They need foster parents who are willing to step up and care for adolescents when they need it most. They want to stay in their own community and attend their own school. They want to maintain their friends and have the ability to see family members regularly. These teens know they are the last on a foster parent's list, because of their age, or their experiences. They need to know there are adults in our community who believe in them and want to be by their side. Are you that adult?



frequently asked questions about fostering teens

Can you have other children in the home?

Yes! Our teens will benefit from having a relationship with all members of your family. Most foster families count on the support and understanding of their extended family, too. Fostering becomes a family commitment.

Can you have teens be involved in community activities?

Absolutely! We want our teens to have experiences like their peers, including but not limited to, sports, band, volunteering, after school jobs, friends, faith, and more!



What are the needs for teens in foster care?

Like all youth their age, teens in the custody of Protective Services need unconditional positive regard, acceptance, stability, encouragement, and guidance. Teens living in foster care often experience hard times and trauma related to abuse, neglect, and other serious family problems. They need to learn to trust adults, to build relationships, and gain confidence, to learn new tasks and address any challenges they may face.

What help does the agency offer foster parents of teens?

You will be part of an awesome team! The teen will have an independent living worker who will work with the teen to develop life skills based upon an assessment and plan specific to their needs. Our youth have a wide variety of skill levels and some need more assistance than others in this regard. The teen will also have an assigned caseworker who works with the teen and his/her family toward reunification. Each teen is also assigned a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL), an attorney who represents the best interests of the teen in court. An attorney who represents what the teen wants to happen in court is also appointed. In addition to these professionals, the teen placed in your home may have a counselor, probation officer, and other helpers in the community. As with any placement, each foster family will have the support of their foster care worker. The agency does reimburse each foster parent a daily per diem to care for the teen, but it does not meet any and all the teen's financial needs. The agency will provide an initial clothing voucher when the teen first enters agency care, and then every quarter, thereafter. For those teens who are graduating seniors, the agency does provide some funds to assist with senior expenses. On occasion, the independent living worker will offer financial incentives to assist the teen in learning how to budget and save money. Regardless, every foster parent is to offer an age appropriate allowance from their foster care reimbursement.

Who pays for medical care?

The agency is responsible for medical costs while the teen is in foster care, in addition to any insurance his/her parents may have. The agency applies for Medicaid on behalf of the teen and will help the teen and foster parent locate providers if the teen does not already have them in place. The agency does not pay for over the counter medications.

What training will I receive?

You will receive pre-service training over a variety of topics, First Aid and Safety, and CPR, prior to licensure. After being licensed as a foster parent, you will be required to receive 40 hours of training in a two-year period. There is significant training available related to fostering teens. The agency may also connect you to another foster family of teens as a support.



Are there teens that need adopted?

Yes, there are teens who are awaiting adoption. As mentioned earlier, you never outgrow needing a family! Nearly every year, Protective Services celebrates the adoptions of teens by their families.

frequently asked questions

The following represents frequently asked questions and answers regarding foster and foster care/adoption parenting. If you have further questions, please feel free to call 740-652-7887 and ask to speak with a foster care worker. You may also find helpful information at www.fosterandadopt.jfs.ohio.gov.

How old do you need to be?

You must be at least 18 years old to become a foster or foster care/adoptive parent.

Do you have to have a certain income?

Documentation must be provided demonstrating the ability to meet your household needs.

Do you have to be married?

No, you may be single, married, divorced, widowed, or co-parent. In Ohio, co-parents are not permitted to adopt.

Do you have to own your home?

No, you may rent. You must have adequate space available and the approval of a landlord must be documented if you rent.

Can you be a foster parent if you work?

Yes. Foster parents are reimbursed for care of the child/teen placed in the home, but this reimbursement does not meet all of the needs and costs of the child placed in your home.

Do foster children/teens need to have a separate bedroom?

No, but each child must have their own bed. Foster children cannot have a bedroom in the attic or basement, unless approved by a fire inspector and agreed to by the agency. An infant may sleep in the foster parent's room in an approved crib until the age of one.

How many children/teens may I foster?

The assessor will work with you to determine what is the best number of children and/or teens for your home during the family assessment. There are several factors to consider such as space in your home and vehicle, your capacity, other children/teens in the home and more. We encourage foster and adoptive families to consider caring for groups of brothers and sisters so they can remain together. For the first two years, licensed foster parents may take up to three children/teens. After two years of service, a foster family can foster up to five children/teens with a ten child/teen maximum in the home at any point after two years. The number of children in the home is inclusive of biological children/teens, foster children/teens, and any children/teens for who you babysit or provide care.

Can a foster parent or adoptive parent request specific ages or gender of children/teens to be placed in their home?

All families will enter into a mutual agreement with the agency about the age and gender of a child/teen you believe would be a best fit into your family. However, the agency needs families who will accept teens and sibling groups and you may be contacted to accept placement of children/teens outside of your preferences.

Who are the kids that need foster care or foster care/adoption?

Most of those needing foster care and adoption are adolescents. These youth need loving, safe, and dedicated foster care and adoptive families who will help the youth fulfill their potential. *Teens need families!*

Am I able to be a foster or foster care/adoptive parent if I have a criminal record?

Possibly. Each situation will be carefully reviewed using the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) rules for foster care and adoption. If a person's criminal record meets the rehabilitation requirements of ODJFS rules, then the person may be considered as a potential foster or foster care/adoptive parent. All adult household members must also have a criminal background check. There are some convictions that will exclude an individual from fostering or foster care/adopting.

What is the home assessment or home study?

This is a process of sharing and gathering information to determine an applicant's suitability to be licensed and approved to provide foster care and foster care/adoption. This is based upon state and agency rules and policies.

Who will do my family assessment?

Once your completed application has been accepted, a caseworker on the foster care/adoption team will be assigned to be your family worker and will complete the family assessment. All caseworkers in the foster care and adoption unit have specialized training qualifying them to conduct home assessments.

How long does it take?

The process may take six months once the application packet is complete. This may vary based upon the availability of staff and agency resources and/or family circumstances. The agency and the applicant(s) may also mutually agree to take additional time to complete an assessment based upon extenuating circumstances.

When can I have foster or foster care/adoptive children or teens come to my home?

After your assessment has been completed and approved, the agency recommends the family for licensing to ODJFS and/or approves the family for foster care/adoption. Once this occurs, the agency may begin placing in your home if it is determined to be an appropriate placement meeting the child/teens' unique and special needs. There is no guarantee a license or adoption approval will result in the placement of a child/teen with a family.

What kind of assistance does the agency provide to foster parents?

Foster parents receive reimbursement for care based upon agency policy. The agency is responsible for medical, behavioral health, and dental care for those in their custody and secures Medicaid for children/teens. A foster care caseworker is assigned to provide ongoing support and monitoring of licensure and approval. Foster parents will be part of the child welfare team working with the biological family. The foster and foster care/adoptive family will also have ongoing support of the child/teen's family caseworker. The agency also provides training and support opportunities on a regular basis.

May I foster or foster care/adopt a child of a different race?

Yes. The agency does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or gender, and complies with the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All available children will be placed with the family who can best meet their needs.

What is meant by a child/teen with special needs?

This is used to describe a wide variety of characteristics of children/teens. This includes but is not limited to: a child of a minority race, a sibling group or older child/teen, medical conditions, emotional and behavioral health concerns, learning delays, developmental disabilities, and children/teens who have waited more than a year to be adopted after permanent custody. These criteria are also used when determining adoption subsidies. For all children/teens awaiting the right foster care fit or foster care/adoption, their common special need is becoming a part of a family. Everyone deserves family.

Are there babies or young children available for foster care/adoption?

No. The agency does have young children and infants waiting for adoption. However, most of these children are adopted by their relatives or kin, or the foster family who has cared for them while awaiting reunification. All adoptive placements must be in the best interest of the child and federal and state rules guide agency practice in this. There are many more school aged and teens who are waiting for an adoptive family. At Fairfield County, you must be a foster parent to adopt unless you are family member or kin to the child/teen to be adopted.



Fairfield County Job & Family Services **Foster Care & Adoption**

