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Tuesday, January 09, 2007

## Brownsville council asked to consider program

By Christine Haines, Herald-Standard  
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**BROWNSVILLE** - Borough council on Tuesday was asked to consider joining a new program being operated by the Fayette County Juvenile Probation Office that would place young offenders into community service.

Mike Lukac, the community service and youth commission coordinator for the county office, said the program provides benefits to the community while teaching responsibility to young offenders.

"It shows them that there are consequences for what they do," Lukac said.

To participate in the community service program, juvenile participants must be 14 or older and not likely to commit another offense.

They may be assigned up to 25 hours of service work for misdemeanors and up to 50 hours of work for felony offenses.

Additional hours may be added for technical violations of their probation, such as missing curfew.

"You have the right to know the offense the juvenile is on probation for. It is not to be disclosed outside the program," Lukac said.

Lukac said a service site has the right to refuse any juvenile and may end the placement at any time for any violations or problems.



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If the borough enters into a contract with Fayette, the county would provide accident and liability insurance for the work site and work site supervisor.

All juveniles must be trained and supervised at the job site, Lukac said.

He also encouraged area residents to get involved in the Fayette County Youth Commission. The organization works with first-time offenders ages 10 to 18 who have committed summary or misdemeanor offenses.

The members of the commission are considered community probation officers and will meet with a juvenile at least once a month for up to six months.

Juvenile offenders who successfully complete the program have their record expunged at the end of the six months.

"It's set up to succeed. They have to be genuinely sorry. They have to admit to the offense, and there has to be a good likelihood they will not commit the offense again," Lukac said. "The program is five years old and has an 80 percent success rate."

Council did not take action Tuesday to participate in the community service program but is reviewing the information provided.

In other matters, the board opened bids for road paving for repairs to streets damaged in this spring's flooding.

The apparent low bidder was Pompeii and Sons, at a cost of \$27,174.

The work will include paving on Washington, Monongahela, Middle Alley, Joiner, 18th, 13th, 16th, Sheridan, 17th, Lockhart and Steele streets, Steele Street Extension and Spice Alley.

Three additional streets will be paved through grant funds and have been put out for bids by the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority.

In another matter, after an executive session, council voted to hire Paul Shumaker as a full-time police officer.

Other applicants through the Civil Service Commission who met all of the requirements to be officers will be placed on the part-time list if they desire.

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