

EMC...from Page 1A

health insurance for the Board and the attorney when half the people in the membership don't have health insurance themselves.

"That is pure arrogance on behalf of the board," Phillips said. "With health insurance involved, you'll never get that board to vote for term limits. It's money in their pockets because health insurance is expensive."

Phillips said the fact that the Board is self-perpetuating, meaning it nominates its own members for director posts, is something else that must change.

"That nominating committee must go," he said. "We (petitioning candidates) had to work our rear ends off to get enough signatures to be in this election. If you're a member of the EMC and you want to run for the Board of Directors, you should be able to do that."

"People shouldn't have to go through an act of Congress to be able to run for the Board of Directors," Phillips said. "The nominating committee wouldn't nominate us to run for these seats. And that's a bunch of bull."

Phillips added that the monthly and annual meetings of the Board of Directors should have large crowds on hand.



Barbara Heimanson gives the EMC board an earful at the Annual Meeting in Hiawassee on Saturday. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

"People need to be involved in the monthly meetings," he said. "Anderson Music Hall seats 2,900 people. Next year's annual meeting, I'd love to see 2,900 people here."

Phillips said he hopes the clean sweep of directors' seats sends a message to the remaining members of the Board of Directors.

"We've got to work with the existing members of this board of directors," Phil-

lips said. "One of my highest priorities is to look out for the 191 employees of the EMC. They do the job, they put their lives on the line, and they shouldn't be in fear for their jobs."

"I think they should be able to talk to board members and not feel their jobs are threatened," Phillips said. "I'm on the board and I should be one of the ones that they should call. You don't know what is going on unless some-

one tells you. This ordeal with Terry Taylor could have been resolved years ago if people didn't feel like their jobs were in jeopardy."

As for Logan, he defeated Trout with 69.5 percent of the vote compared to Trout's 27 percent.

"I guess I'll have to dust off my suit and tie now," Logan said regarding his election to the Board of Directors. "I think the biggest thing that comes from this election is transparency."

"Once things become more transparent to the membership, a lot of this stuff will take care of itself," Logan said. "A lot of the issues have already started being addressed. There are some more things that need to be addressed."

Logan said that the membership sent a strong message with the election results. However, he said he still had the utmost respect for his defeated opponent.

"I'd like to say this. Brian Trout is a fine fellow," Logan said. "Brian was on the board just a few months. I think he lost this election more by circumstance than his character."

"It's time for the healing process to begin within the EMC," Logan said.

Tax Bills...from Page 1A

Union County.

"It's a dynamic way of accessing important tax information online," Knight said.

Property tax information is now available at www.uniongatax.com

"Our new online tax website allows citizens to Search, View, and Pay their Property Tax Bill from the convenience of their home, office, or by using their Smart Phone," Knight said. "Citizens can pay online via PayPal using any one of four major credit cards or debit cards, and we are in the process to be able to accept checks online."

"In addition, citizens

can print a copy of their tax bill, print a copy of their paid receipt, see if their mortgage company has paid their tax bill, and request an address change using the website features," Knight said. "The Tax Office in Union County plans to continue to upgrade the technology and services they offer their citizens. Our office will continue to look for opportunities to make our citizen services more convenient while improving the efficiency of our tax office."

Knight said that his office is still working on delinquent taxes and had a recent tax sale on July 1.

"Twenty-one properties sold out of 35 taken to tax sale," he said. "The next tax sale will most likely occur sometime next year. We will be mailing letters later this month to customers that have not made an effort to pay their back taxes or signed a payment agreement. If you have not paid your 2012 and back land or home property tax, or if you are currently behind on your personal property or mobile home taxes you will be getting a 30-day letter of intent to file a lien on your property."

"This letter is your chance to get in here now and

get your property tax caught up," Knight said. "Once a FiFa is filed on your property it may damage your credit for up to 7 years. It is not our goal to sell anyone's property. It is our goal to collect the delinquent taxes to be fair to the people that pay their property tax. Anyone with questions or concerns is welcome to come in or call our office, but you will be required to pay your taxes in a timely manner. I want to thank my staff for their dedication and the citizens of Union County for allowing me to serve as their tax commissioner. My door is always open."

DDA...from Page 1A

Resources represents the engineering consulting firm the DDA brought on board to help guide it through the process of getting the land ready for the project. In a letter to the board, Fowler noted that

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently determined that the total area classified as wetland may need to be expanded.

Currently, there are no wetland mitigation credits available in the surrounding area, and the board is looking into the In-Lieu Fee Program to mitigate wetland credits.

Furthermore, the DDA had asked that the stream crossing be considered a roadway drainage structure, but the Georgia Environmental Protection Division disagreed.

"I've asked Sen. Steve Gooch to approach Russell Pennington to see how we need to go from here on this," said Mayor Jim Conley. Pennington is the director of Policy and Public Affairs for the Georgia EPD.

The fate of the proposed new exit ramp from State Route 515, which is crucial in expanding the area near downtown for greenspace and business development, awaits a favorable determination on the drainage structure from the EPD for the stream crossing.

And so far, the Army Corps of Engineers has given its blessing for the DDA to obtain stream credits outside the state, but the issue surrounding wetlands has gotten more complicated, with many questions remaining on the status of the project.

The DDA must decide when to buy the credits from the Coosa River Basin for \$18,000. The board members are hesitant to act too soon due to the uncertainty in dealing with the Corps of Engineers and EPD.

"At some point we've got to do this, but we've also got to find out if we can do the whole project," said Thompson. "It's almost like going through a minefield - you don't know where to step."

Thompson plans to speak with Fowler this week on mitigating next steps, and the DDA may hold another called meeting soon to discuss the details of that conversation. The board will wait to purchase stream credits until

the issue with the EPD becomes clearer.

"We've got more answers

we've got to get before we can make a good, qualified decision," said Thompson.

Crash...

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Sheriff Clinton said.

Prior to the crash, the Union County Sheriff's Office was preparing to lay down stop sticks at the Union County line, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said.

"We were prepared to assist when the crash occurred," Sheriff Mason said.

The fatal crash remains under investigation, Sheriff Clinton said.

"Once all facts are known, the information will be released to the public," Sheriff Clinton said.