

EMC...from Page 1A

was just the bylaws.”

Henson said he harbored

no ill.

Henson gained enough petition signatures to run for the seat in 2015, but opted not to run at that time.

Today, Henson is back, ready to seek another seat on the board. This time, Henson was nominated by the EMC's Nominating Committee to again earn a seat on the Board. He is joined on the ballot by Karen Pirie and Tommy White in the race for the Union County seat.

Jenkins rode the wave of petition ballot winners in 2014. He has almost completed his first term as a board member.

Pirie currently is a substitute teacher for Union County Schools. She and her family attend First Baptist Church of Blairsville, where she is a member of the choir and volunteers as the choir teacher for 3-year-olds.

White is a lifelong resident of Union County. He attended Woody Gap School, went to North Georgia College, and graduated from the University of Georgia.

He is past president of the Union County Saddle Club. He has managed consumer finance offices for Chrysler First, NationsCredit, and TransAmerica. He is self-employed at Budget Propane in Suches. He and his wife Susan have two daughters.

In Towns County, Waldroup and his wife Sonya have two children, Alexis and Tristan. They attend Macedonia Baptist Church and have called Towns County home for the past 15 years. In 2010, Jason started working for the Clay County Water & Sewer Department where he now serves as director, overseeing all personnel and

operations.

Rogers is a lifelong resident of Towns County. He and his wife Diane have two daughters and three grandchildren. They attend Macedonia Baptist Church. Rogers retired from the Georgia Department of Transportation as a heavy equipment operator, and later as a foreman with 34 years of service.

Meanwhile, in Clay County, Ledford, a life-long resident of Clay County, North Carolina, is currently the Used Car Manager at Ware Chevrolet in Blairsville. He has over 30 years of experience in new and preowned vehicle sales and is skilled in negotiating transactions with customers to close on deals and increase sales.

Ledford has proven leadership skills that help team

members achieve individual sales, enhance customer service, and drive business goals. He has dedicated his career to delivering high quality service and building relationships with his customers.

Cabe is a lifelong resident of Clay County, North Carolina. He graduated from Hayesville High School in 1994. He has been married to Amanda Smith from Blairsville for 15 years, and they have two daughters, Kaitlyn and Maci Cabe. They are members of Mountain Grace Baptist Church in Clay County, North Carolina.

Logan, who also won election by way of petition ballot in 2014, presently serves as treasurer of the BRMEMC, chairman of the Finance Committee, and serves on the North Georgia Network Board of Directors.

Gowder...from Page 1A

counts of Violation of Georgia's Controlled Substance Act, Towns County Superior Court records show.

Heaton did not face any charges in Towns County, according to arrest warrants. That also was the case in White County.

Heaton and Gowder both were arrested in Union County on Feb. 4, 2016, Gowder for three counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance, one count of conspiracy; and Heaton for 40 counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances, one count of conspiracy.

In Union County, Gowder was indicted for two counts fraud in obtaining controlled substance, and two counts Violation of Georgia's Controlled Substance Act for illegally possessing hydrocodone and oxycodone, respectively, the indictments show.

Heaton was indicted on 43 counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of a Schedule II controlled substance.

According to the Union County indictments, from Dec. 15, 2011, until June 8, 2015, Heaton allegedly wrote 43 prescriptions for either hydrocodone or oxycodone for Gowder.

Heaton also was indicted in Union County on one count possession of less than an ounce of marijuana, and one count of Violation of Alcoholic Beverage Statute, the indictments show.

As previously reported, Gowder and Heaton's North Carolina criminal cases came up in June 26 administrative sessions at the Cherokee County Courthouse in Murphy, resulting in both receiving Dec. 11 continuance dates for future administrative sessions.

Heaton and Gowder were arrested in North Carolina on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, following indictment by a Cherokee County, North Carolina grand jury, both for five counts of trafficking in opiate medications, and five counts of obtaining a controlled substance by forgery, according to Cherokee County, North Carolina Sheriff Derrick Palmer at that time.

Previously, Gowder and Dr. Heaton received 2016 continuances in their North Carolina cases from March 28 to April 4, then from April 4 to July 11, and from July 11

to Nov. 7.

On Nov. 7, Gowder received a continuance to Feb. 27, 2017, while Heaton got a Jan. 3, 2017, court date to appear in front of a North Carolina Superior Court Judge.

The result of that Jan. 3 appearance was a continuance for Heaton to a Feb. 27 administrative session, the same day as Gowder, and the two appeared again for administration sessions on June 26, resulting in their Dec. 11 continuance dates.

Dr. David Gowder, Mike's brother, was also arrested Feb. 4, 2016, in Union County on 36 counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance and seven counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances. Three other Gowder family members were arrested that Feb. 4 in connection with the incidents in question.

David Gowder, Gail Gowder, Virginia Lou Harkins and Jamie Harkins were indicted in Union County during the April session of the Union County Grand Jury.

Millage Rate...from Page 1A

appraiser's office was showing that the value of properties has increased.

“Not only had there been an increase in value, but in parcel numbers as well. I realized that we had an increase in commercial parcels but a decrease in residential. This is because the state has reevaluated parcels within districts all across the state to make sure that they're being classified correctly.

“So, if we lower the millage rate slightly then it would reflect that our taxes are the same as they were last year, as well as our tax revenue.”

All council members voted unanimously to decrease the millage rate from 2.0 mills to 1.945 mills to maintain the same tax revenues as last year, without an increase in the tax rate.

In other city council news, the council heard from EMI engineer Chip McGaughey regarding a current grit problem at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Essentially, sand and other small, granular substances are infiltrating the sewer system via rainwater and other water sources that flows through the system. That matter then makes its way to the Wastewater Treatment Plant, damaging the pump as the water is being filtrated.

“The sand has eaten a hole in the casing of the pump,” said McGaughey. “The sand in the sewer system is more or less naturally occurring. It can get into the sewer system through construction or other means.

“The sewer system has inflow infiltration from rainwater because of leaks or something that allows that rainwater to get into the system, so it brings in grit as well.”

While the damage is somewhat extensive, the problem can be solved through the purchase of a grit removal system that will sift through the grit before it reaches a point where damage can occur. However, this system does not come cheap and would cost the city an estimated \$700,000 or more to purchase and install.

Although this is a significant amount of money for the city to come up with, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley pointed out that, in the long run, it would save the city thousands of dollars per year in maintenance.

“The grit murders our parts and equipment,” said Mayor Conley. “We've got to find some way to prevent it from getting into our pumps. So, we're going to have to get a grit removal system and it's going to be kind of complicated to get it done down there, but it needs to be done.

“The next step would be to go ahead and complete the environmental report so it's already ready when and if you get the GEFA loan,” said McGaughey. “I would recommend that you all authorize us to do that.”

An environmental study will cost the city \$3,500. The council voted unanimously for EMI to move forward with the environment study as well as a survey to begin a formal cost analysis for the project.

The city will continue to move forward in addressing the situation in the weeks and months to come.