Lake resident seeks empty County Council seat

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WALHALLA — A second candidate is jockeying for position in the race to fill an empty Oconee County Council seat.

C. Paul Corbeil, a Lake Keowee resident from Salem, said Monday he intends to seek the Republican Party nomination for the District 1 seat vacated three weeks ago by George Blanchard.

Former Councilman Stephen Moore, who lost a Republican primary to Blanchard in 2006, already had indicated he would run again for his old seat.

The filing period officially opens at noon Friday and closes May 18 at noon.

Moore said Monday he expects others to join the fray before the filing period closes.

A primary election would be held July 7. The winning candidate must garner a majority of the votes in the primary or a run-off election would be held July 21.

Oconee County Democratic Party Chairman Ken Campbell said Monday he would not be surprised if his party also had to go through a primary to find a candidate for Blanchard's seat.

"Oconee County government has been a revolving door of Republicans," Campbell said. "People are very unhappy with the state of county government. The County Council needs someone from the other party to shake things up. The definition of insanity is to do the same thing and expect a different result."

In announcing his candidacy, Corbeil points to his 35 years of experience in management and executive positions with large financial institutions.

"This is a time when Oconee County Council is facing serious challenges due to poor economic conditions, a series of changes in key county personnel and a public that is increasingly concerned about how council is arriving at decisions on certain controversial issues," Corbeil said in a statement. "If elected, I intend to work with fellow council members to help face these challenges in a way that will be beneficial to residents of not only District 1, but the entire county ..."