

Primary election tomorrow

Mayoral candidates emphasize different leadership styles

By Tom Prentiss

With no single issue taking prominence, Lincoln voters go to the polls tomorrow to select two mayoral candidates from a field of seven for the May 1 general election.

Mayor Helen Boosalis, seeking to retain the office she won by a 3,000 vote margin in 1975, will have to fight off the challenges of six male candidates.

Although no single issue has been the focus of the campaign, there is a definite feeling that Boosalis' leadership style could be different.

Candidates stressing different leadership styles are led by Stan Matzke, a fiscal officer at Southeast Community College and former director of the Department of Administrative Services under former Gov. J. J. Exon. Matzke is considered to be the main challenger to Boosalis.

Other candidates are Martin Kushner, Alan Hansen, James Scanlon, Barton Chandler and Stuart Wetzler.

Filing procedures

The large field is attributed to the filing procedures. A 10 dollar fee and 100 signatures earn a place on the ballot. The top two vote getters in the primary will meet in the general election May 1.

Three candidates have claimed that they will make it into the general election. They are Boosalis, Matzke and Hansen.

Helen Boosalis said she cannot campaign like she did in 1975. Her campaign strategy then was to go door to door almost eighteen hours a day. But she said her current duties as mayor don't allow her to campaign the way she'd like.

"It's pretty hard to campaign when you're working 70 to 80 hours a week," she said, "but I've been fortunate to have a lot of good volunteers willing to work."

Boosalis, whose husband Michael is a plant pathology professor at UNL, is basing much of her campaign on what she called her "sound fiscal management." She said since she became mayor in 1975, the number of city employees has not grown. In these times of inflation, she said that shows good management.

Involvement a strong point

Added involvement in city affairs was another area Mrs. Boosalis stressed as a strong point. She said that the added participation by neighborhood, community and civic organizations has been "tremendous."

Although she thinks she will win the primary, she added it would be a tough race. Her opponents criticize her relationship with the City Council, traffic problems and what she called her "anti-business image."

"I'm not anti-business" said the 59-year-old mayor, "I've done more to try to keep in touch with business' concerns than any previous mayor," she said.

Her relationship with the City Council is no different than any other council she said. Although they have had their differences in the past, Boosalis said she would like to have lots of discussion rather than no discussion at all.

Council support

Council members Bob Sikyta, Joe Hampton and Leo Scherer have all said they support Matzke. She said they think the city council should be going in a different direction.

Traffic problems have increased, she said, but the city



Daily Nebraskan photo

Mayoral candidate Helen Boosalis

was handling the problem through driver behavior studies, safety awareness programs and implementation of the police department's "Drive Friendly" program, she said.

Boosalis, 3019 Jackson Drive, said crime was a larger problem in Lincoln than traffic problems in the past. With the de-emphasis on traffic and concentration on crime, the city's crime rate has decreased while the national average has been on the upswing, she added.

Stanley Matzke, 2054 South St., has been most critical of Mayor Boosalis' overall style of leadership.

Too much, too little

He has been critical of the mayor's policy of attending city council meetings. As mayor Matzke said he would only attend if requested by the council. He says the mayor is always interrupting other city officials.

"She doesn't let them stand on their own two feet," said Matzke.

He also said that Boosalis should have been more involved in the re-zoning of city lands.

"She indicated that she wasn't that involved and she should have been," Matzke said.

Boosalis said she gives her department heads "all the freedom in the world" and pointed to a section in the city charter that entitles the mayor to be present at council meetings.

She said she didn't get involved in the redrawing of zoning because it is her job to "carry out policy, not make it."

Current dissatisfaction

Matzke said Lincoln needs long term planning and a sound traffic program. He said he thinks the city is in "reasonably good shape" but could be better under his leadership, because he has a better idea of what the legislative and executive branches should be.

He said the six candidates challenging Boosalis show that there is some dissatisfaction with the current administration.

Both Boosalis and Matzke are planning to spend around \$10,000 on the election.

"To beat an incumbent with less money is difficult,"



Daily Nebraskan photo

Mayoral candidate Stan Matzke

said Matzke.

One person who doesn't believe that money is necessary to win the primary is thirty-one year old Alan Hansen.

Hansen, a welder for Burlington Northern, will not accept any campaign contributions over \$50. He says this is indicative of his average man campaign style which he wants the voters to see.

Won't be bought

Saying he won't be purchased by anyone wanting to donate large amounts of money, Hansen has spend only \$236 so far.

He said it was possible to win with no money and lots of hard work.

"The average citizen can't afford to donate money," said the lifelong resident of Lincoln. "I don't want people's money. I want their vote."

He admits he doesn't have any previous experience with city government but feels that is representative of most citizens.

Saying he likes the downtown beautification program on "O" Street because, "It looks nice and deters the crime element," he added that it should not be carried too far.

"As a retail merchant center, Lincoln's basically dead," Hansen said.

The local media have chosen to see the race only between Boosalis and Matzke, he said, but he thinks different.

Gunning for top

"I plan on being the top vote getter in the primary," said Hansen. "I think Helen (Boosalis) will be lucky to make it into the general election."

He said he gets the feeling from the anti-Boosalis sentiment he has noticed as he campaigns throughout the city. Much of his enthusiasm has resulted from finding out people are not satisfied and may want a change, he said.

He had some negative comments on Matzke's campaign too.

"I think Stan Matzke may have over-campaigned himself right out of the race," Hansen said. Matzke started out well but has turned more people off than on as the campaign went along.

Hansen, 3221 S. 52nd St., claimed that the city currently works for big business and big money and in the process of doing so, shortchanges the average citizen. He said he would be willing to work to change that.

Hansen said that if he was not elected, he may run again in 1983.

"At least name recognition wouldn't be a problem then," he said.

Opportunity knocks

Stuart Wetzler, said if he became mayor it would be "the first opportunity Lincoln has had to be governed by the people."

He would do this by placing all City Council issues before the people by sending surveys out in water and sewer bills. He said this would give the people time to fill them out at their leisure in their own homes.

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