

Councilman Haar won't run in '97

THE MEMBER WHO
always carried a laptop
will leave the council
to devote more time to
his job.

By CHAD LORENZ
Senior Reporter

After 7 1/2 years on the Lincoln City Council, Ken Haar is taking a break.

The laptop computer-toting councilman said this week he would not run for reelection in 1997.

Haar said he wanted to leave the council to give more time to his job at the Nebraska Arbor Day Foundation and spend more time hiking and bik-

ing. Serving on the council was an enormous time commitment, Haar said, often requiring 20 hours a week in addition to his work.

Haar's record includes attempts at starting a minor-league baseball franchise in Lincoln.

Two years ago Haar rallied interest and support for the idea, but struck out with the council.

"I just couldn't line up that fourth vote," Haar said.

But Haar said he thought he roused enough support to spark a future movement.

"Maybe it will still happen," he said.

Haar also advocated a closer look at city-owned natural gas service.

Although the council decided to let People's Natural Gas keep providing Lincoln's natural gas, Haar's persistence made the council more vigilant

when regulating gas prices, he said.

Haar, who is a Democrat, said the most rewarding part of his job was watching Lincoln citizens come together to fight for their interests.

He recalled a meeting when the city council was voting on increasing bus fares and citizens flooded the city council chambers, demanding low rates.

Haar was known as the council member who was rarely without his laptop computer at meetings. Throughout the meeting he would type in notes on the council's actions.

"I keep track of every vote, and the council votes unanimously 90 percent of the time," Haar said.

And when there is a division, the council has settled issues before they get explosive, Haar said.

"Usually things can be worked out with compromise," he said.

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