

# Cowper names Smith, Sampson, Munson

Gov. Steve Cowper announced the appointment three additional cabinet members who bring to eight the number of permanent commissioners he has appointed since he took office.

They include:

•Anchorage attorney Tony Smith, commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. The department Smith will oversee has more than 400 employees and a \$58.8 million budget and is responsible for a host of issues and agencies from banking regulations and international trade to insurance, the Alaska Power Authority and the Alaska Railroad.

•Jim Sampson, the Anchorage-based business manager for the Alaska State District Council of Laborers, commissioner of the Department of Labor. He will oversee 600 employees and a \$50 million budget. Responsibilities include labor standards and safety, workers' compensation and employment security.

•Fairbanksan Myra Munson, a state assistant attorney general who primarily handles child abuse and neglect cases, commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services.

She will oversee a department budget of \$219 million and about 1,700 employees. The department handles such things as public assistance and mental health and family and youth issues.

"These three Alaskans are a welcome addition to my administration," Cowper said.

Smith, 44, is a partner in the Anchorage law firm of Smith, Gruening, Brecht, Evens and Spitzfaden and handles banking, maritime, natural resources and commercial law.

He is a board member of the Anchorage Organizing Committee for the Winter Olympics, a member of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and a former University of Alaska adjunct professor in the School of Justice.

Smith, a Vietnam veteran who served on Cowper's Transition Steering Committee, also is a member of Commonwealth North, the Alaska Resource Development Council and the Audubon Society, and he writes a column for the *Anchorage Times*. His law degree is from Cornell University. He and his wife Carol have two children.

Sampson, 35, has been business manager of the Laborers since 1985, and for 10 years before that he was a representative for Laborers Local 942 in Fairbanks. He has served on the board of trustees of the Laborers' pension fund since 1981 and has worked on various construction projects as a laborer since 1968.

Sampson, who graduated from Nenana High School and attended UA-Fairbanks, will receive a bachelor's in labor studies from Antioch University's George Meany Institute in January. He is a former member of Tanana Valley Community College's Citizens Advisory Council on Petroleum Technology Program and is a member of the Clear Sky Sportsman's Club.

He and his wife Beth have two children.

Munson, 36, has worked since 1983 in the Human Services Section of the Attorney General's Office on child abuse and neglect cases, Indian Child Welfare Act negotiations and other child care issues.

For three years before that, she was the Anchorage court coordinator for the Department of Health and Social Services, handling child and sexual abuse cases.

Munson, who was born and raised in Alaska, holds a master's in social work and a law degree, both from the University of Denver. She is a member of the Alaska Bar Association's Alaska Native Law Section executive committee and chairperson of the Fairbanks Child Sexual Abuse Task Force. She has two children.

All three commissioners will earn \$69,600 annually.