

Brower enters NSB mayor's race campaign against Adams

By LINDA LORD-JENKINS
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The two North Slope Borough men who filled a political void left when Borough Mayor Eben Hopson died last year, will be facing off for the job of mayor in the October election.

Eugene Brower, former head of the Borough Public Works Department, announced last week that he will face incumbent Mayor Jacob Adams in the Oct. 6 election.

Adams was elected mayor of the borough in June of 1980 following the death of the highly respected Hopson.

Brower said he will base his campaign on his contention that the Borough's unemployment rate has risen since Adams has been in office. Brower is critical of what he terms Adams' inability to train borough residents to take over jobs created by new borough facilities in various villages.

Brower charged that the Brower/Adams coalition failed when "Adams began slowing borough construction contracts, affecting projects upon which hundreds of borough residents were employed."

"Last year the borough had the lowest unemployment rate in the state. Our people enjoyed full employment under the Hopson administration. But today, our villages suffer high unemployment, completely unnecessary. Today the North Slope Borough is standing still, dead in the water. Employee morale is very low," Brower said.

According to the Alaska Department of Labor, the unemployment rate in the North Slope Borough was 8.2 percent in June of 1980. This year's June rate is 9.6 percent.

Brower said Adams has been

bringing in outside help to fill jobs Brower says should go to residents of the borough.

Brower said that he was fired from his position of Public Works Director when he told Adams of his decision to run for office. Brower maintains he asked for a two-month leave of absence for his race.

Adams said he doesn't know what type of campaign to expect but admits that Brower has "Put together a fairly good campaign staff."

Adams answered Brower's charge about lack of training of residents by saying "We are lacking that but we are putting a program together. These things don't happen over night. It takes time."

Adams also says the increase in unemployment in the borough stems from an influx of outside labor.

Adams said he talked with Brower about Brower's request

for leave of absence for Brower when Brower decided to run. "I asked him to reconsider and he said no, he was going ahead. I asked for his resignation and he refused to give it to me. The Borough department heads serve at the discretion of the mayor."

Brower is the current Chairman of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission and president of the Barrow Whaling Commission. Both are posts he assumed when Jacob Adams vacated them to assume the mayor's position.

Brower is president of the Barrow City Council member, member of the Barrow Volunteer Fire Department and the North Slope Borough School District Bilingual Advisory Council.

Assisting him in his bid for the mayor's post will be Eben Hopson, Jr., son of the late mayor, who recently returned from Ireland where he had been living

Nelson Ahvakana will be Brower's campaign manager.



Eugene Brower