

Selby Reflects on Borough and its Challenges

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

As we first told you on Thursday, Kodiak Island Borough Mayor Jerome Selby is not seeking re-election to the office he's held for over two decades. He made the decision, he said, because he figured 25 years at the helm was enough.

"You know the Kodiak Island Borough's been in existence for 50 years; I've been mayor half of that time almost."

He said during his time as mayor he always appreciated the support he received from the residents of the borough.

"There's been a ton of people that have given me a lot of support. There's been a lot of people that have helped me. It's never has been about me, but about trying to find the best answers for this island community. And that takes a lot of ideas from a lot of people. Which they were free to share with me, and I really do appreciate it, even though sometimes we didn't agree. But sometimes when you don't agree with someone they still have a good idea and a good point."

Having served as mayor all but six of the 30 years since he was first elected in 1983, Selby said he wished more people would become involved in public office.

"In Kodiak we don't tend to draw a lot of people running. I can understand that, 'cause you're making a serious time commitment. And so people are busy, but even so, taking care of our public interest and taking care of the other people on the island needs to rise a little bit in my view and a lot of people's time commitments and what they see as being important. But that's from someone who's done this for that very reason for probably too many years."

In retiring after so many years, Selby thinks the borough is in good shape, despite occasional bumps in the road.

"I'm proud of this borough. I think it's one of the best boroughs in this state. I'll stack it up against any county in the U.S. anytime. 'Cause I interact with a lot of those folks. And while you know, we've got issues — everybody's got issues — but I tell you, 95 percent of them would love to have the problems we have on Kodiak Island, compared to some of the huge problems some of them have. And so, we're doing okay here. Overall, we're very fortunate and very blessed to be living on Kodiak Island."

Selby's last assembly meeting will be on October 17th.