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MAY 2025, Vol 5 | Iss. 4

*Nightlife  
edition!*

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# SEGUIN TODAY

MAY 2025, Volume 5 | Issue 4

An issue all about nightlife wouldn't be complete without a reminder to all that nightlife should be enjoyed safely. Here in Seguin, we have so many amazing places to go out and have a drink with friends, but it's important to remember that with great drinks - comes great responsibility, and that is to not get on the road drunk.

In Texas, the legal limit for blood alcohol concentration when driving is 0.08%. That limit can be easily reached having merely two or three drinks in an hour. It's easy to do, and a lot of us have been there. And that's why I advocate strongly for using ride share programs like Uber or Lyft if you're out on the town. You can also have a friend be the designated driver.

However, you choose to stay safe, just do it, that way you can have a fun night out without the worries and dangers that come with drunk driving.

That said, let's dive into this issue which is full of fun places in Guadalupe County to check out if you're looking for a night of fun!

Lizz Daniels  
*Creative Director*

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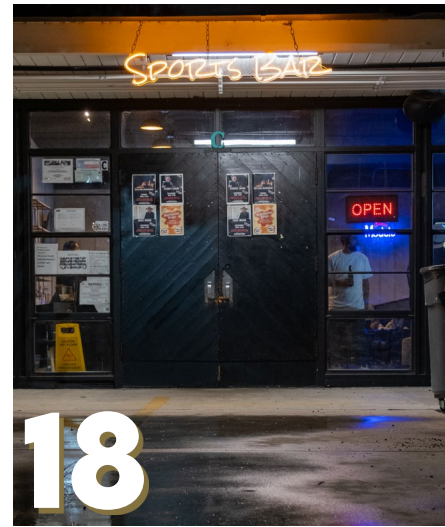


## COVERSHOT

Downtown Seguin is home to a variety of hot night life spots for locals to try out. Pictured is Schultz Saloon and Big Chief Cigars located on N. Austin St.

Photo by Jarred Kindles

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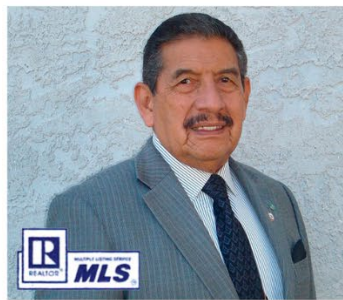


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# Enjoying the NIGHTLIFE *at Seguin Brewing Co.*

Story & Photos by Lizz Daniels

**L**ocated in historic downtown Seguin, this brewery boasts 12 taps and great food for a hangout on the town. With new updated hours: Wed 3-10, Thur-Sat 11-10, Sun 11-8, you can sip and savor through the day or night five days a week.

Founded in 2012, Seguin Brewing Co. began operations in 2014 in a 1500 square-foot shop in the owner, Brian Wallace's parent's backyard.

"I took my savings, sold my Dad's tools and equipment, and then fundraised money from community members to help get us started," Wallace said. "Shaun and I made a goal to move the brewery to town to build a taproom within 3 years of opening. We did it in a year and half. We opened in downtown Seguin in 2016. We were able to purchase the historic Leon Studios building from a couple of local cats who were holding it for someone like us to come along. We gutted the inside to build it back as a brewery and taproom."

The building was originally in pretty bad shape, but with hard

work and grit, Wallace and his company were able to restore some of it's original characteristics such as the beadboard ceiling and bricks.

"We also saved some of the still useful wood floors and built the bar top," he said. "We really have Carlos Moreno and Lonestar Home Solutions to thank for the care and effort they took in helping us revitalize the buildings while trying to maintain as much historical character as we could. We later expanded into the Sagebiel building to add the pizzeria in 2019. We launched the pizzeria just 6 months prior to COVID, which of course changed our entire trajectory. We did a second capital fundraiser to help fund the buildout and provide working capital. We were on target for all of our 6 month projections for revenue and growth, and then we were forced to close the day before St. Patrick's Day, 2020."

After fighting their way back from pandemic-related closures, the bar soon reopened.





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“It has been 5 years since COVID and we and our industry are still trying to overcome the challenges that were created,” Wallace said. “With that said, we are proud to still be in operation. We are still a family owned brewery with local investors who helped fund this project. We started in a shop selling hand bottled beer, distributing throughout the San Antonio to Austin corridor. We then produced cans and grew into HEB’s Buc-ee’s, Total Wine, Spec’s, Twin Liquors, Whole Foods, Pic-n-Pac and several other local chains as well as sold our beer on draft to bars and restaurants throughout Texas. We no longer distribute our beer, and now provide a family friendly pub atmosphere with a full menu featuring brick oven pizza, artisan hamburgers, wings, salads, sandwiches and more. In addition to the beer we make in house, we also carry guest beers, mead, wine, cocktails, and a high end whiskey collection. We host public and private events, have Live Trivia every Thursday night, live music every Friday and Saturday night, and work very hard to be a welcoming place for people to visit, enjoy food and friends.”

Waiting for friends of the bar are numerous taps to try along with cocktails, wine and even mead for those with a sweeter palette.

“We have 12 taps. 11 serve beer and 1 tap we keep dedicated to our friends Mike and Melissa Poole over at Blue Lotus Winery and Texas Meadworks. We have served their Blackberry Mead continuously since 2017, I believe. We might have to fact-check that with Mike. We also serve other local craft beers, primarily from Texas, that rotate continuously. We have roughly 14 recipes that we have produced of our own beer, but we don’t continuously produce all of them. We also carry wine and have a full bar. We are probably most known for our top 3 selling beers that we produce, 9-Pin Kolsch, Honey Pecan #5 Cream Ale, and Lake Breeze Blonde. It is fun to be thought of for innovation in beers, but we have also been very creative with cocktails and drink specials.”

Creativity is a natural part of the beer creation process, but even in creativity, some things are rooted in tradition. That’s why Seguin Brewing Co. produces beer the old-fashioned way.

“The way we produce our beer is about as old as beer itself,” Wallace said.

“We do not add anything extra to our beer. It is made from malted barley, hops, water, and yeast. We don’t even inject carbon dioxide into our beer. Our beer is naturally carbonated by reintroducing fresh yeast into the final packaging of the beer into the keg. This causes a secondary fermentation of the beer, which creates carbon dioxide, and because the carbon dioxide is trapped in the keg, it dissolves back into the liquid, carbonating the beer. It took a tremendous amount of trial and error from Shaun to come up with the exact measurements to properly pressurize the kegs. Since Shaun developed that strategy, it was enhanced by Jason Parks, who brewed for us for a couple of years, and then has been further improved upon by Lou and Linda Sangurima, our current brewing team. The quality of beer that we produce with the equipment we have is nothing short of impressive. I am truly lucky to have been able to work with very smart and talented people on this business venture and they all have done it primarily for the love of beer and our taproom atmosphere. I am grateful for all of them.”

As for their outstanding cocktail menu, Wallace says that is all thanks to General Manager, Tyree LeBrecque.

“She has been instrumental in coming up with a creative martini menu as well as other seasonal specials and a fine housemade sangria. What we most hope to be known for is a friendly, safe place to come and hang out. And if you haven’t been by in a while, you need to come and eat. David and Brady are leading the kitchen with Tyree’s guidance, and they have done a lot to enhance our menu and improve consistency.”

With so many bars to try in Seguin, Seguin Brewing Co. is just one on a long list of hot spots that each have their own culture and style. From German beer to classy mocktails, nightlife in Seguin is unlike anywhere else. While downtown has its share of bars, it also has breweries, cigar lounges, and billiards. Beyond downtown, offerings become even more diverse with distilleries, wineries, and more. No matter what kind of nightlife fits your vibe, Guadalupe County has something to fit your style. Now, let’s take a look at just a few of the area’s hottest spots for kicking back with a good drink. •





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# Let's GO! IN, Seguin

## **The 1916 Bar & Bistro**

Just off of downtown, lies the 1916 Bar & Bistro inside Seguin's historic Aumont Hotel. This Seguin nightlife spot has a speakeasy vibe and serves appetizers and entrees from their kitchen. If you haven't been in a few years, their menu has grown drastically, and now includes burgers, sliders, sandwiches, and more for hungry patrons to enjoy in the historic atmosphere.

Bartender Renae Young-Henze has worked at the local spot for seven years and has seen a lot of changes during that time. Nowadays when you walk in you'll be greeted with a chalkboard wall filled with their many specials plus their menu of craft cocktails and eighteen craft beers and ciders.

"We are noted for our Blood Mary's and have won best of the best three times," she said. "Our setting in a historic hotel makes for great ambiance. Our staff is friendly and really cares about our patrons and their lives. It's a place you can go where you know there will always be a friendly face, whether you need a friend to listen, a buddy to hang out with, or an escape from the everyday. We are the best place to unwind after a busy day. It's truly a place where everybody knows your name."

## **Texas 467 Tavern**

Boasting a full bar with a variety of beer and liquor with 12 taps including domestic, import and craft with a dancehall and live music.

## **BS Brewing**

"So much more than just beer. We have committed ourselves to changing the mindset of what a brewery should be for the community. We aren't close to anything and neither are our neighbors. We are here for you to get away from whatever you're trying to leave in the city and we want you to bring your whole family with you. Plenty of room for your kids to run and play, no TV's, no WIFI, just good beer and great company."

## **Schultz Saloon**

If friendly service and a saloon-style atmosphere are what you're looking for, look no further than Schultz Saloon. With friendly staff, plenty of seating, and live music, this is as country as downtown bars get.

## **Windmill Farms**

Outside the city located on Huber Road sits Seguin's Windmill Farm winery, where good grapes come together into great wine. This remodeled barn offers a cozy atmosphere rife with Southern charm. With food trucks on location and live music, you can kick off your boots and go from day to night all while sipping on wines made right on premises. Whether you prefer something dry or sweet, they have an assortment of flavors to bring your palette and summer alive.

## **Blue Lotus Winery**

For those who prefer something a little different from beer and liquor, the Blue Lotus Winery is located on 12 acres of land just outside the city. With wide open spaces and vineyards on location, this Seguin winery gets everything right. According to their website, the winery is "dedicated to offering only the finest wines and meads. We have also taken great care in assembling a team of only the best to help our customers enjoy their experience while visiting our vineyards and winery."

## **The Barbarosa Trough**

This one is as country (and German) as it gets. No need to drive to Luckenbach, when this old-school beer joint is right nearby. Per the owners, "the Barbarossa Trough is exactly the place Waylon and Willie painted in song. The square-fronted, tin-porched shack is way out in the country, at the intersection of a couple of farm-to-market roads in the cotton fields east of New Braunfels." With a honky tonk jukebox and shuffleboard, patrons can enjoy games while listening to old-school country as they knock back a few cold ones.

## **Seguin Bar & Billiards**

If you're looking for entertainment and a good drink, Seguin Bar & Billiards might be the right spot for you. Also, located in downtown, SBB hosts billiards tournaments, and DJs in a wide open space you can really enjoy. Whether you're looking to kick back and have a few cold ones while playing a game of pool, or if you just want to sit back and people watch, SBB has the entertainment you're looking for, with an upbeat modern vibe and fun music.



# Other Spots to Checkout...



## Johnny Pickles Distillery

Location: 1711 N. Austin St.

Family-friendly and locally owned, Johnny Pickles makes whiskey from grain to glass distilled from local corn.

From their website: "Our facility was originally Seguin, Texas's Austin Street Fire Station, constructed in 1978. It was in service until it was decommissioned in the early 2010's. The firehouse sat empty until it was purchased for our distillery in 2020. Property improvements were a labor of love. Our current facility now has an operational bar, production area, outdoor stage, and plenty of parking."



## Carrigans

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Branding itself as a nightclub rather than a bar, Carrigans boasts DJs, live entertainment, and more along with drink specials and great bartenders. For those who want to drink and dance, this is a great spot to check out, and grab a drink with friends.



## Big Chief Cigar Company

Location: 111 N. Austin St.

Those looking for an alternative to drinks can check out Big Chief Cigar. Inside this Seguin humidor, guests can try different cigars from their offerings which include a wide variety of selections and a staff to help you handpick your perfect puff. Big Chief Cigar Co. touts itself as the place "where premium cigars meet small-town charm. They are Seguin's go-to location for puffing cigars in style."

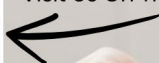


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# Seguin's TOP Cocktails

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## **Johnny Pickles Distillery**

Location: 1711 N. Austin Street

Johnny Pickles Distillery represents Seguin's newest modern creative grain-to-glass Texas Whiskey distilled from local grain operated by their family team. This Distillery is mostly known for its premium whiskey but their margaritas and cocktails do not disappoint.





### **The 1908**

**Location:** 100 E Court Street

The 1908 is nestled right downtown offering its customers an extraordinary craft cocktail experience. In addition to their delicious drinks, The 1908 is home to an underground speakeasy lounge to bring you a next-level experience where you can lounge with friends, enjoy a romantic date night, or celebrate a special occasion.

### **Schultz Saloon**

**Location:** 109 N. Austin Street

Schultz Saloon is a full-service bar, specializing in craft cocktails made with fresh ingredients, and the Largest Selection of Whiskey and Bourbons in Seguin. As Schultz Saloon was originally opened in 1900, its quality of craft cocktails and creative mixology has continued to grow. Stop in to catch some live music from local artists every weekend.



### **1916 Bar & Bistro**

**Location:** 301 N. Austin Street

Nestled inside the historic Aumont building, 1916 Bar & Bistro offers a full dinner menu and bar. Beer aficionados will find a great selection of craft beer on draft and cocktail lovers will enjoy their takes on the classics like their Deep Eddy Lemon Drop, Herradura Margarita, and savory Bloody Mary.



### **Seguin Schoolyard**

**Location:** 225 N. Saunders Street

Welcome to Seguin Schoolyard – where families eat, shop, and play in a renovated elementary school setting. Try some of their signature drinks like the Strawberry Margarita or the famous Tomato Loco paired with live music, food trucks, and yard games.



AUTHOR  
Brooklyn Wilkinson  
Main Street & CVB Intern





# Ringing the BELL for *Nightlife Recess*

Story by Cindy Aguirre-Herrera  
 Photos by Jarred Kindles

**W**hen the sun goes down, Seguin lights up — and not just for the grown-ups. As summer nears, nightlife isn't just about cocktails and concerts — it's about community. And there's one spot in town where families and friends of all ages can enjoy the night together: The Seguin Schoolyard.

Located at 225 N. Saunders St., The Seguin Schoolyard is about to celebrate its one-year anniversary this June. The site, once a long-vacant Seguin ISD campus, has been transformed into a vibrant indoor-outdoor hub for food, shopping, and entertainment.

The original vision — to breathe life back into the old school building — continues to evolve under its current owners, who are intent on branding it as the destination for locals and out-of-towners alike.

“We love having people from other towns come visit,” says General Manager Miguel Alvarado. “They Google us and are instantly drawn in — it's family, it's community, and it's fun.”

The layout of The Schoolyard keeps its schoolhouse charm while offering something for everyone. Inside, former classrooms have been reimaged as retail spaces, while outside, an expansive courtyard features picnic areas, a new pickleball court, and even a playscape for the kids — all within view of the bar.

Yes, the bar. It's one of the most popular draws, but unlike your typical

nightlife spot, this one caters to both adults and families. “It's a full bar with live music, but also a place where parents can relax while keeping an eye on their kids,” Alvarado said.

Open from Wednesday to Sunday, the bar features three distinct areas: an indoor sports bar, an outdoor concert bar, and a concession bar. Hours vary, with late-night options available on the weekends. “It's usually only Saturday nights after 9 p.m. that we start checking IDs indoors,” Alvarado notes. “Otherwise, everyone is welcome.”

With a full stage and professional sound setup, The Schoolyard has become a go-to venue for live music in Seguin. Recent headliners include Stoney LaRue and The Spazmatics — and Alvarado teases even more big names ahead.

“We're really excited about June,” Alvarado said. “We have Sammy Arriaga, Josh Ward, and William Beckmann lined up. The vision is to keep building on that momentum — we want families and the whole community to feel like they don't have to leave town to have a great night out.”

That philosophy — Eat. Shop. Play. — is at the heart of The Schoolyard experience. Whether it's grabbing a cocktail, enjoying live music, browsing local vendors, or letting the kids burn off some energy, there's no curfew on fun here.

At The Seguin Schoolyard, the recess bell rings long after the school day ends — because in this corner of town, nightlife is for everyone. •







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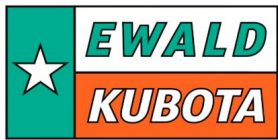


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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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### Featured Events



#### Your Best Life Festival

NAMI Guadalupe County is hosting Your Best Life Festival, a free health & wellness expo, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on May 17, 2025, at the Seguin Coliseum, 950 S. Austin St., Seguin, TX. Attendees can explore community resources, insurance options, mental health support, fitness demonstrations, and safety information. Kids can enjoy free activities, including a bounce house and face painting. Giveaways and interactive booths will also be available. For more information, visit [NAMIGuadalupeCounty.org/festival](http://NAMIGuadalupeCounty.org/festival).

#### May 17

##### Bulk Clean-up Event

Guadalupe County will hold a Bulk Clean-up event on Saturday, May 17, from 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM. The event will be held at the County Road & Bridge Central Yard, 310 IH-10 West. All vehicles must enter from North Austin Street and turn onto North Guadalupe Street, which is 0.5 miles north of IH-10. Visit [GuadalupeTX.gov](http://GuadalupeTX.gov) for a list of acceptable items.

#### May 17

##### Badges, Bikes & Tykes

The Seguin Police Department and Seguin Fire Department are hosting Badges, Bikes & Tykes from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on May 17, 2025, at Max Starcke Park Large Pavilion. This family-friendly event will feature games, prizes, bike raffles, music, and more. Join local first responders for a fun-filled day promoting bike safety and community engagement.

#### May 19

##### Independent Cattlemen's Meeting

The Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas will be hosting a chapter meeting at 7 p.m. on May 19 at the Geronimo Community Center, located at 280 Navarro Dr. in Geronimo. The meeting is open to those interested in supporting and advocating for the Texas cattle industry. For more information, contact the Independent Cattlemen's Association at 512-620-0162.

#### June 4

##### Private Applicator Training

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Bexar County, will be hosting a Private Applicator Training at 8 a.m. on June 4 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 208, in San Antonio. The cost is \$60 per person, which includes study materials. Payment may be made by cash or check on the day of the event.

#### June 28

##### 2nd Annual Build for Better Bash

Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio & Guadalupe Valley invites the community to the 2nd Annual Build for Better Bash on Saturday, June 28, 2025, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM at Texas Lutheran University - Seguin Hall Parking Lot (1000 W Court St, Seguin, TX 78155). Join us for a community wall build to support local families in need.



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# Blueberry Lavender Lemonade

Cool off those summer nights with a fresh cocktail

As the dog days of summer press on and people continue to enjoy outdoor gatherings, tasty and cool cocktails remain ideal when entertaining. Blueberries continue to be the stars

of summertime shows, and can be the inspiration for your next drink.

The following recipe for “Blueberry Lavender Lemonade” from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry

Council pairs the sophisticated flavor of lavender with tart blueberry in a refreshing concoction that also includes gin. The result is fruity, floral and fragrant.

## Blueberry Lavender Lemonade Cocktail

*Makes 2 servings*

### Lavender Simple Syrup

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon dried edible lavender flowers

- 3/4 cup blueberries, divided
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 ounces gin
- 1 tablespoon lavender simple syrup
- 1/2 cup club soda
- 2 sprigs fresh lavender
- 2 lemon wheels

1. To make the Lavender Simple Syrup: In a small saucepan set over medium-low heat, combine all syrup ingredients and cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 5 minutes or until sugar is dissolved.

2. Remove from heat and let steep for 2 to 3 hours. Strain and set aside.

3. To make the Blueberry Lavender Lemonade Cocktail: In a cocktail shaker, add 2/3 cup blueberries and lemon juice. Muddle berries to release juices. Add gin and lavender simple syrup, and fill with ice. Shake until frosty.

4. Strain through fine-mesh sieve into two ice-filled glasses. Top evenly with soda water.

5. Garnish with remaining blueberries, lavender sprigs and lemon wheels.

Tip: Cover and store remaining lavender simple syrup in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.



In Case You Missed It





*This story originally ran in March 2025, and since publication, the 1908 was approved by the city to begin building. Its new kitchen is under construction now. Courtesy Photo.*



# City incentives to bring new restaurant, new event venue to downtown Seguin

Story by Darren Dunn  
Photos by Jarred Kindles

**T**he city of Seguin is moving forward with a plan that will help bring some new opportunities to the downtown area. The Seguin City Council recently approved a motion asking city staff to move forward with a proposal that would support the creation of a new dining option and a new second floor venue in the downtown historic district.

There's a good chance that most people have never heard of Chapter 380 Agreements. It's one of the tools available to the city when it's offering economic development incentives in the downtown area. Chapter 380 is a reference to a section of the Texas Government Code, which spells out the city's ability to offer these programs. Chapter 380 is a flexible tool that can be used in a number of ways. In this context, the city wants to use it to offer \$35,000 to help install a kitchen at "The 1908" bar, located at the corner of Court and Austin streets. The bar offers three different levels inside its building, including a patio level bar on the ground floor and a sports bar on the top floor. The bar owners say they now also want to offer a full-service

restaurant in that space, and the money from the city would help them get that started.

The city is also offering \$50,000 to help install an elevator in a building located at 113 South Camp St. The elevator would allow the developer to open "The Canopy," which would be a multi-use venue that would open on the second floor of that building. City officials say both the restaurant and the venue would offer something that's either available on a limited basis or offer services that aren't currently available at all in downtown Seguin.

Jake Kozlowski and Pete Aguirre own and operate The 1908. Kozlowski says the bar has gone well, and they now want to bring another food option to the downtown area.

"We plan on starting five days (a week) and then adding in the sixth and seventh days on Mondays and Tuesdays, but we want to be seven full days a week," said Kozlowski.



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Kozlowski says the kitchen would not only allow them to open a restaurant seven days a week, but it would also be a place that offers a wide variety of quality items for the entire family to enjoy.

It's not just going to be a basic wings (and) burgers (menu). We want to escalate it to salmon and we do want to get steaks in there. We want some nice appetizers, especially on certain days of the week and certain times when you're going to have some windows (of opportunity), because there are three different floors. The sports bar is going to be one thing, and sports bar right now is only open Thursdays through Sundays pretty much. That main floor is open seven days a week. So, you want people to be able to come in...have a glass of wine with some calamari or some egg rolls. You want something like that. Or do you want chicken salad? We want to have a really good menu," said Kozlowski.

The Canopy is being developed on the second floor of the building that previously housed the Soel Venue at the corner of Camp and Donegan streets. Spencer Jergins is the projects developer. He says he's moving the new venue upstairs. He says it will not only create better overall space for all kinds of events, but he says it will also open up some much needed retail space on the first floor.

"I thought the upstairs space was actually more fitting for an event space due to the dimensions of it and the way it's laid out. It would be better suited for an event space. I thought the lower floor would actually be better suited for retail. So, by moving this event space up to the second floor, we're creating four new retail locations on the ground floor on Camp Street. I think that ties in really nicely with the restoration project that's happening on Camp Street to light up that street and make it really beautiful, and just have four brand new retail locations there," said Jergins.

Jergins says The Canopy will be a special event space that will bring scores of people to downtown Seguin.

"I've invested a lot of time, energy and finances into bringing this this project to Seguin. I've hired a really good design team and built a really beautiful website that I'm happy to share with you guys. What I see for this space is a really, really amazing downtown event space for the city of Seguin, that will bring hundreds of people, hopefully every single weekend to the city," said Jergins.

The \$50,000 incentive from the city would pay for the elevator that would be required for The Canopy to become a reality. Jergins says without that support; it would be difficult for him to proceed with the plans for overall project.

"It is not financially viable — with how much it's costing to develop the four retail spaces below and how much I'm putting into the top spaces — to do this without the assistance and help in getting this elevator funding," said Jergins.

Jergins says that The Canopy will be a much-needed multi-use event space, that will be available for all kinds of gatherings. He says they will have a stage, a full bar, and other amenities that all look out into the canopy of the large tree outside the building. He says this is a space that will be available to everyone.

"So, we're going to make this a multi-faceted event space. It doesn't just have to be wedding venues. It could be city events. It could be mediation. It could be quinceneras. It could be whatever it needs to be, just a really good downtown event space. It is going to have a beautiful bar. We're trying to operate an affordable price point, that I feel like is not being met in the market right now with venues. So, this won't be a break the bank venue. It'll be, I think, very competitive in the marketplace," said Jergins.

The council was supportive of the new projects for downtown Seguin, but there were some questions raised about the process that staff used to offer the 380 agreements to both businesses. Councilman Paul Gaytan, represents a large portion of the downtown area, said that he had spoken to some existing downtown business owners, who wanted to know why they weren't being offered these kinds of incentives.



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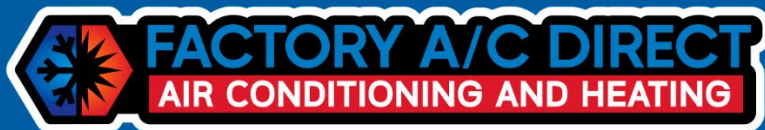


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“This program is not known. There are downtown business owners that want to apply. They view this as unfair competition. They view this as something that they just know about. I felt the pulse of my constituents. I don’t want to see it presented this way again,” said Gaytan.

Staff pointed out that similar agreements have been offered to Burnt Bean Co. for the purchase of its large barbecue pits and to Second Story Dance & Co. for the elevator that brings people up to its second-floor location on Donegan Street. Main Street Director Kyle Kramm says the 380 agreement is just one of the tools that they have for support of developments in downtown Seguin. He says it isn’t hidden and is part of the sheet that they hand out when they meet with businesses to discuss potential developments, or when existing businesses come in to discuss planned upgrades.

“The 380’s were meant to be flexible. So, there is no like set policy. In our application for 380 agreements, we talked about that for downtown (projects) to be considered for a 380 incentive, it’s going to need to be a unique project that fills a void,” said Kramm.

Filling a void is a key component for these 380 agreements. City Manager Steve Parker says they use these agreements to bring unique opportunities to the downtown area in an attempt to bring in more of the things that people say that they would like to see in downtown Seguin.

“When staff hears that somebody’s going to expand or do a major project, they usually come to us very early on and say, ‘what do I have to do to meet historic preservation guidelines or ADA?’ They also meet with the building official. So, we start to hear about some of these projects and if it’s something we feel is probably a game changer in a lot of ways. We step up and make sure that this is a project that’s going to come to fruition, that it’s going to happen. Then you hear there’s a funding gap and they can’t quite do it without some additional assistance. Then we kind of look at that cost benefit analysis and say, hey, does this move the needle in downtown or does it not? (If it does move the needle), then we’ll make the recommendation to the council and then the council gets to decide. If we agree that it’s a game changer, then (the council decides) if we want to support that incentive or we want to reduce that incentive, or we don’t want to do incentive at all. So, then technically up to you all,” said Parker.

Parker says staff handles the vetting of the proposed projects, but

ultimately, it’s up to the city council to decide if their projects are worthy of the incentives being offered. Much like other economic development projects, most of those negotiations take place outside the view of the public. Parker says the due diligence is being done on every single project that’s brought to the city.

“Some of that is actually (done) on purpose, because we want to keep some confidentiality. So, staff reviews a lot of that. (During council meetings), we can always go into executive session and we can review revenue numbers. We also review (the overall project). You know, if he tells us, ‘My elevator is going to be \$180,000,’ we’re going to say no, it’s not. We know these numbers from other businesses that have put elevators in, or we ask for more information. We ask for quotes and those types of things. So, we do try to verify that before we bring you a project that we’re going to recommend, because we don’t egg on our face for something if we don’t think it’s going to be financially feasible,” said Parker.

City Attorney Mark Kennedy says it’s not uncommon for there not to be a budget for 380 agreements. He says it’s a unique tool that is tailored to each project, and it doesn’t always involve spending city funds.

“380 agreements take many different forms. The reason there’s not a standing budget for it is that often times a 380 agreement takes the form of an ad valorem tax reimbursement on an annual basis based on performance. You’ve probably seen that with some of the larger ones with manufacturing type agreements that have come back to you. These agreements can also take the form of a loan or a grant. It’s very flexible. So, in these instances, it gets allocated at the time of that agreement is being approved or just before the agreement is approved,” said Kennedy.

The council on Tuesday asked staff to move forward with developing the performance agreements that would have to accompany both agreements.

Those performance benchmarks would have to be approved by the council at a future meeting before the money could be given to the new restaurant and the new event space in downtown Seguin.

Those final agreements are expected to come back to the council during a future meeting. Council members also asked staff to do more to educate other downtown businesses about the possible incentives that are available through the city of Seguin, and what it would take to qualify for them. •



# We DESERVE a ROCKSTAR

Column by Tess Coody-Anders

Earlier this week, I was grateful to participate in a workshop along with 30 of my neighbors to provide input to the Texas Association of School Boards as they lead the search for the next superintendent of Seguin ISD. Faith leaders, retired educators, parents and executives, city officials and district volunteers provided passionate insights on the opportunities and challenges facing our children, educators and community.

As we shared, one thing became abundantly clear: Seguin wants and needs a rockstar to lead our schools. Someone who is a gifted and transparent communicator, a visionary with the ability to execute. A relationship-builder who understands that Seguin cannot thrive if Seguin ISD is not thriving. Someone with exceptional financial and organizational-development acumen, able to build and sustain a team of highly-expert and collaborative administrators and teachers. A strategist and innovator who sees opportunities where others see only impediments. A leader with a servant's heart, who listens to teachers, parents and students, but is not afraid to make hard decisions.

That's a tall order, given we have less than two months to find, interview and hire this person, but the single biggest impediment is not the short timeframe. It's us.

First, we don't need to apologize to anyone for advocating for a "unicorn." Our students, teachers and staff deserve exceptional leadership. The only myth we're laboring under is the one we've been telling ourselves for generations: that Seguin doesn't deserve good things. We must stop selling ourselves short. Regressive ideas about our schools, our community, and our future are the single greatest threat to improving

the quality of life for the next generation of Seguites. "Good enough" is not good enough any longer.

Second, now is not the time for being polite — to demur or deflect or disengage for fear of being impolitic. Our district faces serious, existential threats that, if realized, will have a ripple effect across our community, impacting everyone regardless of whether you have children in school.

Let me be clear: I do not mean that we engage in ways that are disrespectful, but I am suggesting it's time to be a little more disagreeable. Be you a school board member or a concerned citizen, find a tone of voice that says "We will not be ignored."

Sometimes you have to slow down to speed up. By that I mean that it's worth taking the time and resources up front to run an innovative search process that yields an innovative leader, someone capable of hitting the ground at a sprint. We don't have the luxury of "hoping" we get it right with the next superintendent, or frankly giving them much of a grace period.

So how do we do this? By giving each other the grace to be bold, to ask hard questions, and to expect more. We might begin by asking the following question in all we do: are we doing things the same way we have always done them? The way we did things in the past isn't going to work anymore. The environment, the marketplace, and the world in which our schools operate has fundamentally changed. We need to change, too, in order to rise to those challenges.

I value diplomacy and grace; I almost always assume goodwill. But I'm reconciling those values against the extreme sense of urgency I feel to advocate for our teachers and students. This is not a time to worry about being liked, or being right — it's time to safeguard our future. •



*Tess Coody-Anders is a serial small-towner, having spent most of her adult life in towns where everybody knows your business. A Seguin High School graduate, Tess is the proud owner of Seguin's only independent bookstore - Pecantown Books & Brews. Welcome to Pecantown is Tess's column which seeks to explore opportunities and challenges from explosive growth in our area.*



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