

July 2018 Column

As I began writing this column, I received the sad news of the passing of councilmember Carlos Medrano. He had been our councilmember for District 5 for nearly 8 years, and he will be missed. Carlos did a great job of representing his district and was always ready to do his best to support the city as a whole. He was a champion of keeping kids safe, especially the kids who attended Jefferson Elementary.

In the entire time I knew Carlos, he was never angry or rude, and always conducted himself with dignity during our council meetings. Since he sat to my immediate left on the dais, we were constantly engaged in some sort of banter that was always entertaining - I will miss that very much.

He was always talking about his granddaughters, who admittedly are a handful, but you could always tell he had a love, and a commitment for those granddaughters beyond measure. He was always bragging about them, and talking about the wonderful dinners he was going to prepare for them after the council meetings.

He was set to leave the council in November due to term limits, but he left us far too soon. RIP, Carlos.

It's a little strange and even a bit eerie when you think about what has been happening to our city council in the last year – First, councilmember Phil Seidenberger resigns from council, and then eventually loses his battle with cancer. In the meantime, councilmember Jet Crabb loses her husband Bobby. Then it's not long before councilmember Donna Dodgen loses her husband Jerry. And now we lose Carlos Medrano.

I'm not a believer in curses or anything, but I think we have had an extraordinarily sad and loss-filled year on council. There have just been too many people leaving us much too soon.

And now on to some non-depressing city business that has much to do with our neighbors to the north in New Braunfels – but nothing to do with Matadors or Unicorns.

It turns out that New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) needs water in the newer developments on the south side of their city. It also turns out that Seguin has an abundance of excess water that we can sell them. Our city staff led by Doug Faseler devised a deal that will feed this water to them using existing pipelines, but will eventually incorporate separate lines that will be entirely paid for by NBU. This increased volume of water and the revenues from NBU will keep our water rates here in Seguin low for years to come.

We have also proposed an ETJ swap with New Braunfels – Due to the growth we are experiencing, development is starting to encroach the border of our extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) with New Braunfels. If you are not familiar with the term ETJ, it is the unincorporated area of the county where a city is allowed to annex.

Currently, the ETJ is drawn in sweeping arcs that bisect many properties all along the border. It is not drawn along property lines, landmarks or roadways. Many large tracts of land are split between the two ETJ's, making development a very difficult thing to accomplish along the ETJ border. There are also development tracts on the New Braunfels side of the ETJ border that are not served by anything in New Braunfels, and it would make sense that they be part of Seguin instead. No one could even conceive this problem 25 years ago.

What we have done is submit a plan to the City of New Braunfels that would essentially clean-up the border and follow property lines and major roadways. The acreage swap would be virtually equal. The ball is in their court, and we await their compromise and/or counter offer.

Gosh I love this town!