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Boswell's shuts its doors after 22 years in Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher



Boswell's closed its doors July 3. Photo Pippa Fisher

July 3 was the last day of business for the party supplies store, Boswell's. The announcement was made just a couple of weeks prior, surprising employees who said they were sad to hear the news.

The family-owned business had all its remaining stock moved down to the Danville store by the July 15 deadline to vacate the premises. Longtime employees have been offered jobs in the Danville store.

"We have had a 20% increase in rent over the last three years," explains storeowner Luke Boswell. He says that back in April he sent the long-term leaseholders Stuart Company an email suggesting that Boswell's would like to decrease their space by 20% in order to stay afloat financially.

Initially he says the Stuart Company seemed willing to entertain the idea.

But, says Boswell, when he raised practical questions about the cost involved in splitting the store into two units requiring dividing walls and another entrance, he heard nothing.

Boswell says that all the speculation last year about the location possibly being an ideal site for new city offices might be partially at play here. "That the landlord didn't want to negotiate tells me he felt empowered," he suggests. However, Bill Stuart of Stuart Company says merely that they are currently trying to lease the property out.

In an attempt to stay in Lafayette, Boswell says they did explore other possible locations, including Fiesta Square but, says Boswell, his broker told him as they looked into perhaps going into the old health food store, Fiesta Square management did not want a business such as Boswell's there.

Boswell has just renewed the lease on the Danville store.

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