

# Meet Chip Seigel, Legal Goaltender for Vegas Golden Knights



BY SCOTT G. WASSERMAN, ESQ.

Before I sat down with Charles “Chip” Seigel at his office at City National Arena in Summerlin, I wondered how a person ends up as chief legal officer of the Vegas Golden Knights, as I am sure other attorneys who happen to be fans of the Golden Knights may have also wondered. As I spoke with him, I learned his history is filled with many interesting turns, and as a result of his varied work and life experiences, it is thoroughly logical how a person with Seigel’s background and experiences ended up in this high-profile role in the field of sports and entertainment law.

## Chip’s Childhood

Charles Seigel III was born in University City, a suburb of St. Louis. His mother, Harriet, was a homemaker; his father, Charles, was a practicing attorney. He was named after his father, Charles,



The Las Vegas Golden Knights bus arrives at the Reno Ice arena. Photo by Scott Wasserman.



and hence the nickname, “Chip,” as in chip off the old block. Seigel attended Ladue High School in St. Louis, where he was a member of the school’s ice hockey team. Seigel played center for the Ladue Rams, and he remains proud that he was a proficient scorer on the team (the local paper documented that he was in the top three scorers in one successful season).

Seigel felt he was a very good hockey player in high school. He had the speed and skill necessary to be successful, but he was also self-aware of the fact that he probably did not have the physical stature to be successful as a professional hockey player. As a former high school hockey player who then

went on to college and law school, it seems fitting that Seigel ultimately ended up as a chief legal officer to a National Hockey League team.

Seigel knew from an early age that he wanted to be an attorney. In grade school, he found himself advocating for other children on the playground, and he knew from that experience that he had the skill set to be a good advocate for others.

Seigel completed his undergraduate work at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He was an accounting major, with finance as a minor. While he enjoyed the accounting courses, he knew that he did not want

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to be an accountant. Instead, he felt he could use the knowledge he gained from the accounting and finance courses as a business attorney.

Seigel decided to return to the St. Louis area for law school, where he had family and friends. He attended Washington University School of Law, where he knew four other law school students with whom he had grown up with around St. Louis. He was familiar with the law firms in the St. Louis area, and had the counsel of his father regarding the practice of law in the St. Louis area. In law school, Seigel focused on tax and securities law, again with an aim of practicing business and transactional law.

Seigel's first legal position was as an intern at the firm of Gallop, Johnson and Neuman, which was one of the largest law firms in the area at the time. The firm hired him out of law school in the securities department, where he immediately became involved in major tax cases. He loved litigating, and transferred to the litigation department full time. After spending more than eight years with the firm, he decided it was time to go out on his own. Seigel, and another associate at Gallop he believed to be a great litigator, started the firm of Seigel and Wolff, focusing on commercial trials and appellate work. While at his firm, Seigel married and started his family. After 13 years of practicing in his firm, which included administering the firm while trying cases, he sought to focus more on balancing his family and work life, and decided, with that goal in mind, it was time to try another challenge.

In 2005, the CEO of CKE (Carl Karcher Enterprises) Restaurant Holdings, Andrew Puzder, hired Seigel as the general counsel for CKE Restaurants. Puzder knew Seigel, as they both attended Washington University School of Law, and Puzder had been a commercial litigator and worked with Seigel's dad in St. Louis. CKE Restaurants owned Carl's Jr. and Hardee's restaurants. Seigel relocated to southern California for this

new position. One of the people that he happened to meet while working for CKE Restaurants was Bill Foley, who was a major individual shareholder of CKE and chairman of the board.

In 2016, CKE Restaurants relocated its company headquarters to Nashville, Tennessee. While Seigel initially worked in the Nashville offices, he soon took an opportunity to return to southern California. Seigel worked as a consultant to Apollo Global Management during the time that it purchased Qdoba Restaurant Corp. In February 2018, Seigel became the chief legal officer for Qdoba. Like all of the restaurant industry, Qdoba was severely and negatively affected by the COVID pandemic. After the pandemic, the company began a rebuilding process.

## Chief Legal Officer, Foley Entertainment Group

At the beginning of 2021, Seigel learned that a legal position was open with the Vegas Golden Knights. Seigel contacted Foley to express his interest in the position. Foley invited Seigel out to Las Vegas, and after meeting with Foley and the VGK team, Seigel was hired as the chief legal officer of the Golden Knights, and, thereafter the Foley Entertainment Group, which comprises a group of entities associated with VGK.

The Foley Entertainment Group has a sports division consisting of the Vegas

Golden Knights, the Henderson Silver Knights, the Vegas Knight Hawks (an indoor football league team), and also European and New Zealand football clubs; a hospitality division consisting of several hotels, resorts, and restaurants; a venues division consisting of the City National Arena in Summerlin and the America First Center in Henderson; and a foundation division consisting

of several charitable foundations (including the Vegas Golden Knights Foundation and the Folded Flag Foundation).

As the chief legal advisor of the group, Seigel's role is to support the revenue-raising operations of its various entities. Much of his time is utilized negotiating and providing legal support on various contract agreements – including broadcasting and network agreements, ticketing and suite agreements, licensing agreements, sponsorship agreements, vendor agreements, retail operation agreements, merchandising agreements, operational support for arenas (including all services such as security

or parking), and hotel or resort contract issues. He also provides legal support to the human resource side of operations – including risk management issues and safety policies. Because of his business background, he also offers guidance in business issues generally. The Vegas Golden Knights also employs an attorney in its hockey operations who handles player matters such as contracts, the salary cap, and collective bargaining agreements.

Seigel is also an adjunct professor at UNLV's William S. Boyd School of Law, teaching a class in sports law. The class provides a legal perspective on the business aspects of professional sports.



Chip Seigel as a young hockey player.

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## Perks of the Job

There are certain perks that come along with the job as chief legal officer of the Foley Entertainment Group. His office in the City National Arena has a large window that overlooks the sheet of ice that serves as the practice ice for the Golden Knights. He attends all VGK home games, including playoff games. And while there are security and health protocols that limit player interactions, there are team pictures and end-of-season gatherings of the VGK family that include both players and staff. Obviously, a highlight for any member of the VGK family would be winning the Stanley Cup in 2023. For Seigel, the Stanley Cup celebrations were as much fun as watching the VGK win the cup. He rode on the coaches' bus in the championship parade down the Vegas strip, and he enjoyed the post-parade rally and celebration with the fans in Toshiba Plaza.

## Family and Fun

When not working, Seigel enjoys time with his wife, Julie, and his grown children, Lauren and Michael. His hobbies include skating and playing hockey on the ice, golfing, hiking, and a particular sport of enjoyment, fly fishing.



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