

Town Hires New Fire Marshall

Lia Martin
Associate Editor

Louis Gagliardi is the next fire marshal for the Town of Longboat Key. Gagliardi replaced Carroll Mooneyhan, who retired recently.

Julius Halas, Longboat Key fire chief, underlined the fact that Gagliardi was capable and experienced serving more than 32 years in the firefighting industry, most recently in the Broward Sheriff's Office Department of Fire Rescue and Emergency Services.

His position as fire marshal will enable the Longboat Key Fire Department to have a fire investigator in house again, though Mooneyhan still serves as a volunteer with the department.

His annual salary will be \$69,409.

"Gagliardi will be the lead person for fire prevention activities throughout the Town," Halas said on Thursday. "His degrees and experience are right on track."

Gagliardi came to us from Broward County where he had been assistant chief a number of years, as well as holding down a bevy of other responsibilities including an assignment with the Fire Marshal's Bureau in 2005 which was responsible for the new construction, plans review and inspections; the assistant chief of operations which centered on air rescue, hazardous materials, technical rescue, airport/seaport support, and Everglades response, as well as being responsible for all fire suppression and rescue units at eight Broward County fire stations.



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Longboat Key Fire Chief Julius Halas and new Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Louis Gagliardi met at Town Hall on Monday, the day Gagliardi began working on the Key.

According to Gagliardi, the Broward Sheriff's Office Department of Fire Rescue and Emergency Services where he was recently employed, was a full-service fire rescue department of approximately 670 employees with an annual budget of \$75 million serving more than 150,000 residents.

"In my current position of assistant chief, I have been responsible for planning, budgeting, and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the many facets of this organization under the direction of the fire chief," Gagliardi said in the Town in his letter of introduction before leaving Broward County.

Prior to that, Gagliardi has a broad range of experience which he gathered in Oakland Park, Port Everglades and other agencies in Broward County.

He began his career in 1988 as an emergency medical technician, with his fire officer one certification won two years later.

By the next year, Gagliardi had also received his fire department basic instructor's certification, and his fire safety inspection certification for the state of Florida and Broward County.

In the next 10 years, he had added to his certifications as a driver engineer in Davie, a fire plans examiner in Broward County, and traveled to Texas to receive his industrial firefighting, advanced flammable liquid firefighting and marine firefighting certifications from Texas A&M University.

In tandem with winning his fire certifications, Gagliardi attended Broward Community College and the University of

Cincinnati, Ohio where he received both his Associate of Science degree in Fire Science, and his Bachelor's of Science degree in Fire and Safety Engineering Technology where he graduated cum laude.

He attended Nova Southeastern University in Davie in 2000 to earn a Master's degree in public administration.

Gagliardi is licensed with the state of Florida as an emergency medical technician, standard fire fighter and his fire fighter certificate of compliance, as well as his fire inspector I license. He is licensed by Broward County as a fire safety inspector and as a building plans examiner.

Some of the courses of study Gagliardi has undertaken, which gives him a wide range of training, according to Halas is in traffic homicide investigation, crime scene procedures, gas and fire emergency training, arson vehicle fires, public fire-works displays, incident command, petroleum emission tank storage, and foam technology; as well as firefighter health and safety at the National Fire Academy.

"I would welcome the opportunity to use my experience, dedication and leadership abilities in the Longboat Key Fire Department. My family and I are excited about the possibility of residing in the Longboat Key area and becoming active members of the community," said Gagliardi.

Longboat Key welcome Louis and Gail Gagliardi and their two children: Matthew, who is a student at the University of South Florida, and Sarah, who is attending Florida State University.

Groins, from Page 1A

had with the impermeability of the T-groin design, and the erosion danger to the adjacent beaches. The RAI stated, "The Department cannot recommend favorably on such a highly impermeable project design. A more conservatively designed project with two or three highly permeable structures may yield substantially less impact to the adjoining properties yet provide some sand retention for this condominium."

The Town responded to the RAI, mainly with the Delft 3D modeling results, which found the solid T-groin design acceptable in terms of not having adverse effects on neighboring beaches.

According to St. Denis, at the meeting

on Aug. 16, the FDEP did not provide any clear direction as to what type of design to utilize for the Islander beach. In an email sent by St. Denis, he stated, "The purpose of the meeting was to find out what type of structures might be permitted in the vicinity of The Islander to address the on-going erosion in that location. My conclusion regarding this permeability discussion was that FDEP staff had no specific proposal or standards in mind to be applied at this time. CPE indicated that they had concerns about moving forward with permeability without knowing the permeability standards that will be used in the evaluation because without the standards the project design would essentially be experimental in nature."

Although CPE requested which types

of groins would be more favorable to FDEP, either by lowering the current T-groin design height, making the T-groin length shorter, or adding a notch at the center of the T-groins to allow water and sand to flow through; FDEP could not conclusively give any specific direction.

Florensa noted that it is difficult to give specific direction because each beach and each location is different and unique. Designs that may work well in one area of beach may not work as well in another location. "Shorter groins will not allow the beach to grow as wide; if you lower the groins, the beach profile will be lower. Each design has to be specifically applied to the particular beach. Each has its own angles, wave climates, all of which has to be taken into consideration," said

Florensa.

Coastal Planning and Engineering will now make design suggestions and alternatives to present before the Town Commission in September. Then, when the Commission makes its recommendation on which direction it would like to proceed, whether altering the groin design plan or maintaining the T-groin design plan currently in place, CPE will move forward.

To date, the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council and the FDEP, along with neighboring condominium owners, have found the proposed solid T-groins objectionable due to the impermeability of the design, and the potential for the groins to create erosion on adjacent beaches.

Erosion, from Page 1A

coastline in the last several years.

Beachfront property owners who owned land in Destin, Fla. formed two grassroots organizations to help them fight for their constitutional rights when the city of Destin and Walton County tried to take their property under the guise of a beach renourishment project. There were 156 members between the two organizations owning approximately 118 properties in the area.

The property owners sued the governmental agencies involved.

David Persson, attorney for the Town of Longboat Key, received documentation on this case which was tried and won in the Florida First District Court of Appeal last April, and will continue on to the Florida Supreme Court.

He sent the documentation to Town Manager Bruce St. Denis with a letter.

"The First District Court determined that the establishment of an erosion control line was an unconstitutional taking," writes Persson to St. Denis on Aug. 25. "The matter has been certified to the Florida Supreme Court as a matter of great public

importance. I will keep you posted of all developments. Presumably the immediate impact to Longboat Key is minimal since the renourishment program has just been completed. This affords us some time to address any issues that may arise out of the eventual Supreme Court decision."

St. Denis said it can be a complicated issue.

"All communities that have beach properties are watching this case closely," St. Denis said in a phone communication Thursday afternoon.

The Case

The case won was a case fought between Save our Beaches, Inc. and Stop the Beach Renourishment, Inc. vs. the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, the City of Destin, and Walton County.

The actual court documents of the case centered on the Gulf of Mexico beaches in the city of Destin, a part of Walton County, which were critically eroded by Hurricane Opal in 1995. The erosion problem was identified by the Department of Environmental Protection,

which placed these beaches on its list of critically eroded beaches.

Destin and Walton County then initiated a lengthy process of beach restoration through renourishment. The process, which included extensive studies and construction design and pre-application conferences with FDEP staff, culminated in the filing of an application for a joint coastal permit and authorization to use sovereign submerged lands on July 30, 2003.

The application proposed to dredge sand from an ebb shoal borrow area south of East Pass in eastern Okaloosa County, using either a cutter-head dredge which disturbs the sand on the bottom of the borrow area and vacuums it into a pipeline which delivers it to the project area, or a hopper dredge which fills itself and is moved to the project site. On the project site, heavy equipment moves the dredged sand as specified in the design plans. The project is executed in this manner and progresses along the beach usually at a pace of 300 to 500 feet a day.

Each day work is in progress, public access to the beach is restricted for a length of about 500 to 1,000 feet in the

immediate vicinity of the area of beach being worked.

The Battle Won

Before the governmental filed their permits to begin the beach renourishment project, the property owners through their duo-organizations — Save Our Beaches and Stop the Beach Renourishment — challenged the permit, which would have created a new public beach seaward of their private beach property, without any compensation to the owners.

If the beach renourishment project was completed, it would have built a public beach in front of their private beach.

They said their rights would have been destroyed as property owners.

Justice J. Polston of the Court of Appeals filed his opinion on April 28 to recommend a reversal of the previous order.

Polston advised all the governmental agencies — the city of Destin, Walton County and FDEP — that if they could not accomplish the beach renourishment project without the taking of private property, the taking must be made by eminent domain proceedings.

Enter the Florida Supreme Court.