

# City parks chief vows to work with beach dw

By Robert W. Bone  
Advertiser Staff Writer

A large group of unhappy beach dwellers and a clutch of apparently sympathetic city bureaucrats last night came to some heartwarming and amicable agreement at the end of an emotional meeting in Waianae.

Prayers for "no pilikia" apparently were answered when City Parks Director Emiko Kudo willingly promised to work with a group of beach park dwellers to help its members get along somehow until they can find affordable permanent housing.

But she also emphasized that she was not authorized to allow them to violate laws against having dogs on the beach, even though she understood their need for the animals.

The group also received assurances of help and cooperation from Charles Torigoe, deputy director of the Department of Housing and Community Development, and Maj. Charles Reeves, an inspector with the Honolulu Police Department.

About 75 adults and a dozen laughing, running and occa-

sionally crying small children filled a meeting room at the Waianae Community Center.

At times, some adults were laughing or crying also.

Sobbing almost uncontrollably, Elsie Mahi told of the difficulties of trying to raise children, keep them healthy, feed them and earn wages while living on the beach, where she is often harassed by authorities. She said she had rented a house that she could not afford, but moved out of it when her children began to get rat bites there.

"I have a very hard time; my children need a home; and I don't need anybody to come around and give me such pain," she said.

Many had similar stories of misfortune which brought them to living in tents on the

beach.

The tightly organized meeting was conducted by Kahe Point Beach Park dweller Kathy Kaleleiki, who acted as chairwoman representing a group of 72 families that she said is living in a half dozen public beach parks along the Waianae Coast. The group calls itself the Citizens for Affordable Housing, Coalition for the Homeless.

The group soon made clear that its members want very much to get off the beach and that they feel life has been made miserable for them by city and police harassment.

"We do want off our beaches," said Kaleleiki. "It's frustrating with all the harassment we have had to put up with."

"We are not campers; we

are survivors," said a man in the audience.

Many came to the meeting because they said they heard that police were going to make a "big sweep" to remove them from the beach tomorrow, an idea Kudo quickly dismissed as a false rumor.

"We feel for you and we want to help," Kudo said. "We

need to work with you as a committee and together with other agencies," she said. She then asked the group to help the department make an accurate list of beach dwellers who need help from city agencies and said that she would help them organize another meeting soon.

Torigoe outlined some city

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