

**REPORT ON THE AAIM CONFERENCE PLANNING SESSION
HELD JULY 30, 2016**

1. **Filing of This Report.** This report is provided as an addendum to the minutes of the AAIM meeting held on July 30, 2016. The purpose of this report is to document the planning session held at the AAIM conference on the same date.
2. **Planning Session Time & Attendees.** Subject planning session was led by AAIM Vice-President Marilyn H. David and held at the end of the annual AAIM conference on July 30, 2016, from about 3:45 – 4:45 p.m. at the Table 100 Restaurant. About 70 percent of the conference attendees participated in the planning session. Also participating were AAIM Directors Elaine Adair, Debra Boswell, Marilyn David, Cyd Dunlap, and Doll Stanley.
3. **Goal.** The goal of the planning session was to provide input regarding initiatives for AAIM to prioritize and focus upon over the coming year. Ms. David began the planning session by reviewing the various ideas for action gleaned from the speaker presentations and hand-outs.
4. **AAIM Support to Pass Mississippi Senator Angela Hill’s Proposed Statute.** Planning session attendees reached consensus for AAIM to focus on getting Senator Hill’s “Dogs & Cats Protection Act” passed this coming year. This Act seeks to reduce abuse of domestic animals. During her presentation at the conference, Senator Hill stated she proposed the bill last session and thought she had gathered enough support to allow it to go forward from legislative committee for vote; but, the Farm Bureau lobbyist came into the committee meeting at the last minute and spoke in private to the committee head, and then the head would not let the bill leave the committee to be voted upon. According to Senator Hill, Farm Bureau used its big-business power to tell lawmakers that strengthening laws to protect dogs and cats would affect farm animals. Farm Bureau’s assertion is incorrect, but legislators went along with it anyway to appease Farm Bureau, because of Farm Bureau’s economic power as a big business in Mississippi.
5. **Measures in Proposed Statute.** Planning session attendees reached consensus on supporting (at a minimum) the following measures in Senator Hill’s “Dogs & Cats Protection Act”:
 - a. **Increase counts limit.** Allow up to 10 counts of animal abuse to be charged for the abuse committed during one incident of animal abuse, if the usual legal requirements for charging counts are met. Presently, only one count can be charged, regardless of the egregiousness or extent of the abuse.
 - b. **Clarify definition of “adequate shelter.”** Presently, the definition appears to be vague and ambiguous and may not withstand legal challenge.
 - c. **Establish a felony for certain first-time animal abuse.** This would allow charging of a felony for first-time animal abuse that is egregious and that qualifies to be a felony. Presently, no matter how egregious the first-time abuse, it can only be charged as a misdemeanor.
 - d. **Require statewide use by law enforcement of the FBI’s standardized form for tracking local animal abuse.** According the Senator Hill and Sheriff Pace (another

conference speaker), the FBI has issued a standardized form for local law enforcement to report monthly on animal abuse crimes to the FBI. This would allow the FBI to maintain an accurate database for identifying and tracking animal abusers who are likely to proceed to commit violence against humans. Criminology research has shown that there is a nexus (connection) between animal abuse and violence against humans, and that violent offenders against humans usually start out by abusing animals. If animal abusers can be identified and tracked early on, it would help law enforcement efforts to prevent animal abusers from progressing to violence against humans. Although the requirement to use the standardized form was issued by the Federal government, State law-enforcement organizations in Mississippi have refused to comply. This hamstrings the FBI's efforts to identify and track Mississippi's violent offenders when they first begin cruel acts against animals, so that law enforcement can prevent later violent crimes against humans.

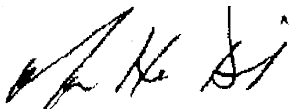
6. **AAIM Action Committees.** Planning session attendees reached consensus for AAIM to prioritize getting Senator Hill's proposed legislation passed (hopefully this coming year) in Mississippi. To do this, and to support the Senator Hill's proposed measures (described at paragraph 5 above), attendees reached consensus on establishing the committees and actions at paragraphs 6a & b below,. Attendees also reached consensus on the committees and actions at paragraphs 6c & d below, which would be accomplished after those in paragraphs 6a & b and as resources allow.
- a. **Establish AAIM committee for gaining official support from veterinarians.**
Volunteers: Elaine Adair and Marilyn David, who will ask Dr. Julie Parks DVM and Dr. Bushby DVM (vet school professor) to join this committee. This committee would be responsible for:
- (1) **Listing** the local veterinary organizations in each Mississippi county, city, and region.
 - (2) **Approaching veterinary organizations** to educate them on the proposed measures and to get individual vets, local and State veterinary organizations, and the Mississippi State Veterinary School to officially express their support of the legislation to the Mississippi Congress.
 - (3) Preparing a template for a **standardized letter** for each AAIM conference attendee to present to his/her veterinarian for signature. The letter will express why Senator Hill's proposed measures are needed in Mississippi.
 - (4) Developing and executing an **AAIM plan** to contact each AAIM conference attendee to personally present the standardized letter to his/her vet.
 - (5) **Following-up** with each AAIM attendee and keeping a **spreadsheet** of which AAIM attendee approached which veterinarian and which veterinarians signed the letter.
 - (6) **Collect** the letters and **send** originals to be maintained by the AAIM Secretary, and send copies to Senator Hill for use in garnering support for her proposed legislation.
- b. **Establish AAIM committee to develop and execute a county-by-county and/or city-by-city media campaign,** including the press and social media, to cover the entire State. Volunteers: Shelby Parsons, Kim Schutz, Doll Stanley, and Yvonne

Taylor. Committee members will ask Debra Boswell, Cyd Dunlap, and possibly Sheriff Pace to volunteer for this committee. The goals of this committee would be to:

- (1) **Identify and list** the civic organizations, State-government officials, and municipal officials in each Mississippi county or city for the committee to reach out to. This list will include but not be limited to:
 1. **Civic** groups (e.g., all animal shelters, rescues, animal control officials, domestic violence organizations, Rotary Clubs, Kiwanas Clubs, Elks Lodges, business organizations, agricultural organizations, trade organizations, and the like),
 2. **Law enforcement** (e.g., police and sheriff departments and associations, animal control organizations, related organizations, etc.), and
 3. **Municipal and government officials** (e.g., Boards of Supervisors, the State Board of Animal Health, etc.).
- (2) Develop a **list of actions** for AAIM members to take regarding presentations to the **civic organizations** in each county and/or city over the next year to garner public support for Senator Hill's measures.
- (3) Develop a **list of actions** for AAIM members to take regarding presentations to statewide and local **law enforcement** departments (including police chiefs) and organizations in each county and/or city over the next year to get them to come on board officially with their support for Senator Hill's measures.
- (4) Develop a **list of actions** for AAIM members to take regarding presentations to the **State-government and municipal officials** in each county and/or city over the next year to get local municipal officials to come on board officially with their support for Senator Hill's measures.
- (5) Develop and conduct a **media campaign** (including presentations and releases to the press and social media) to educate the public, civic groups, law enforcement, and municipal officials on why Senator Hill's measures for animals will improve the lives of humans in Mississippi.
- (6) Develop a **systematic plan** for giving a series of **standardized educational presentations** over the next year to the public, civic groups, law enforcement, and municipal officials in each Mississippi county and/or city, to educate them on why Senator Hill's measures are necessary to improve life in our human communities.
- (7) **Develop the standardized educational presentation** (described in the preceding paragraph) with **talking points**, which will be the one used by all AAIM volunteers in the media campaign. A standardized educational presentation with talking points is necessary to ensure that all AAIM volunteers are giving out the same message and are not contradicting AAIM's goals or each other.

- c. **Establish AAIM committee to develop and execute a plan for incorporating State-statute and other measures into county and city ordinances.** Volunteers: Elaine Adair, Kim Coalter, Cyd Dunlap, Virginia Durham. Summer Knight, Hallie Marshall, Doll Stanley, and Evan Taylor. The goals of this committee would be to:
- (1) Identify the measures from the **existing** State animal cruelty statute that are suitable for incorporating into local ordinances.
 - (2) Identify the measures from Senator Hill's **proposed** "Dogs & Cats Protection Act" that are suitable for incorporating into local ordinances.
 - (3) Identify provisions from the **Mississippi Animal Shelter Guidelines** that are suitable for incorporating into local ordinances. Ask State official Beth Adcock to help with this.
 - (4) Identify provisions from Doll Stanley's model ordinance for **mandatory spay/neuter** (for repeat stray animals) that are suitable for incorporating into local ordinances.
 - (5) Identify the **local officials** in each county and city to educate and approach regarding the above measures and provisions.
 - (6) Develop and manage a **systematic plan** to assign each volunteer (above) to give a standardized presentation during 2018 to individuals and Boards of Supervisors in each county and city, and possibly to Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves.
 - (7) **Develop the standardized presentation** (described in the preceding paragraph) with **talking points**, which will be the one used by all AAIM volunteers in this committee's effort. A standardized presentation with talking points is necessary to ensure that all AAIM volunteers are giving out the same message and are not contradicting AAIM's goals or each other.
- d. **Establish AAIM committee for getting shelters to participate in the "Shelter Animals Count Program" of Maddie's Fund.** Volunteers: Elaine Adair, who will ask Beth Adcock, Debra Boswell, and others about volunteering for this committee. This Committee will develop and execute a plan for getting each shelter in each county and city to participate in the "Shelter Animals Count Program" of Maddie's Fund. This committee's goals are to:
- (1) Develop and execute a **plan** for getting each shelter in each county and city to participate in the "Shelter Animals Count Program" of Maddie's Fund.
 - (2) Get shelters to institute regular, **standardized counting/reporting** of sheltered animals.
 - (3) Help each shelter obtain a Maddie's Fund **grant** for doing this.

THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY THE UNDERSIGNED ON THE DATE BELOW:



MARILYN H. DAVID
Vice-President, AAIM

September 15, 2016