

## Conference Call Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday 8/25/16

Time: 10:00 am

Attendees: Keisha Brown, Mary Evans, Julia Gohlke, Ethel Johnson, Molly Richardson, Sheryl Threadgill Matthews, Sheila Tyson, Steve Wood, and Conner Wu

Announcements: Ethel confirmed Aundretta Montgomery is able to lead as a facilitator for the Camden focus groups. Ethel will email or mail her the script once it's finalized.

Today's meeting priority is to finalize the focus group script in order to submit to IRB.

Focus Group Agendas: We discussed the Birmingham and Camden focus group agendas. Sheila suggested that it would be great to start at 11 instead of 10. We can ask participants to begin arriving at 10:30. We'll plan to have food set up so that they can get their food and go into the focus group tables at 11. We will amend the suggested agenda accordingly.

General Focus Group Background: Molly went over the general background on why we are using a focus group to find out the communities' interests. She followed the document *Focus Group Background*. There was a brief summary of our formatting for the focus groups and some practical considerations on how to engage participants in the discussion.

Consent and IRB: We will soon post a sample consent form. Anyone, including the other participants, is able to sign as the Witness. However, the Person Obtaining Consent needs to be signed by someone (usually a facilitator) who has been approved by Virginia Tech IRB. Those who are not already in the system need to transfer their human subjects training certificate. Contact Julia to find out how. If you are not already trained, you can go through the online training with Virginia Tech, or at your institution.

Script: Julia walked us through the focus group script called *Focus Group Script\_2016*. We emphasized the discussion around the section "Discussion topics and questions." We discussed and decided the primary topic would be **drinking water issues** in Camden and **abandoned houses** in Birmingham. If there is time the second topics would be **sewage and septic issues** in Camden and **air quality issues** will be the second topic in Birmingham. Sheila will get send some information about the current status of abandoned housing and different initiatives and state/local policies as it pertains to Birmingham.

Conner and Julia will revise the text to include specifics from the ROSA phone survey on who is responsible for addressing the issues.

For line of questioning on where participants receive information, Mary suggested trust might be a topic to hit on. Sheila agreed that it's important to explicitly ask the question "Whose information do you

trust?" Others agreed and it will be added to the revised script.

The facilitators will meet briefly before the focus group so that everyone has perspective prior to the focus group. This may help the facilitators to be aware of the issues in order to guide the conversation to a productive. However, it's very important that the facilitators do not lead the conversation or put their own personal opinions in the conversation. We should encourage the conversation to stay on solutions and positive actions moving forward.

Questionnaire: The draft questionnaire (filename: *Draft Questionnaire\_2016*) was reviewed and everyone thought it looked reasonable.

**The documents will be amended based on the conversation and posted soon. On any of the documents, the focus group script, questionnaire, and agendas, please let us know if you think of something to add or change.**

Preparing for next studies: Ethel suggested we have screening sheets for the Summer 2017 personal heat monitor study available at the focus groups. This may be a good way to get people talking about next summer's study and generate a list of some potential interested people to be called in the Spring of 2017 to participate. Sheila noted that public works employees in Birmingham are interested in participating again. In particular, groundskeepers and police officers have expressed interest in participating.

Air pollution update: Sheila asked about the air pollution sampling that was conducted in July. We reviewed that the ozone was higher in Birmingham than Camden. However, there were no differences in the 2 locations within Birmingham and the two locations within Camden. Michael is still analyzing the VOC samplers. We hope to have that information at the beginning of September.

Other updates: Sheila will send her newsletter to the group and information on revitalization projects in Birmingham. She would like any ideas on current studies going on that would be relevant for her community to participate in before these changes occur (and then after). Mary suggested reaching out to Susie Davies as there may be potential pre and post surveys that could be conducted.