

Environmental exposures across urban and rural communities in the Deep South

West Central Community Advisory Board

June 9th, 2015

10:00-11:00 AM

Gee's Bend Ferry Terminal (1001 Earl Hillard Road Camden, AL 36726)

Meeting Minutes

Members in attendance: Mary Evans (UAB), Julia Gohlke (UAB), Ethel Johnson (WCACHIL), Aundretta Montgomery (Community Leader), Ms. Lynn Crow (Wilcox Chamber of Commerce), Sheryl Threadgill-Matthews (WCACHIL), and Steve Wood (Dept of Health, Wilcox Cty).

Observers in attendance: Molly Bernhard (UAB), Asha Jordan (JHU), Claudiu Lungu (UAB), Qing Mu (UAB), and Anna Scott (JHU)

Discussions:

Introductions from observers: Anna and Asha are earth sciences students from Johns Hopkins University. They brought the temperature/humidity sensors and showed the board how they worked. Claudiu and Qing showed the volatile organic compound (VOC) sensors.

Additional membership: Ms. Crow, formerly of Grand Rapids and involved in environmental research there, attended the meeting and may be willing to join the board.

Discussion of topics for workshop: The group discussed the workshop timing and format. It was decided that having it in conjunction with the Black Belt Institute on September 24th would be ideal to alleviate transportation issues and to reach a wider audience. It was decided that the session specific to this project would occur in the morning, starting at 8:30 am. In terms of overall topics for the Black Belt Institute, addiction, pain medication management, and disposal of medications were brought forward as important issues. During the morning session, an initial presentation of the project and the monitor placements could be followed by an interactive session with small groups to gain additional feedback on specific locations for monitors and health issues related to temperature/humidity and VOC exposures. Also, an environmental component of the chosen topic for the later sessions could be integrated (e.g. heat exposure and diabetes, heat exposure and medications).

Discussion of phone survey opportunity: The Researchers Omnibus Survey of Alabama (ROSA) phone survey opportunity through the UAB Survey Research Unit, Center for Study of Community Health was presented and discussed. Members were supportive of a phone survey that would expand on the previous work conducted through focus groups to identify environmental health priorities. Inclusion of

both cell phone and landlines was suggested. A discussion of potential uses of the results included use by ADPH to support applications to funding opportunities through CDC to conduct environmental health related activities such as CASPER and EpiAid/rapid response teams. Steve Wood mentioned that when water pipes froze in 2011, he participated in the door to door survey and emergency response that was led by CDC, ADPH (Melissa Morrison). It could also be used to determine the extent of sewage/septic issues in West Central Alabama Counties. Mary Evans highlighted a recent article about the issue in Lowndes County: http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2015/06/sewage_problems_in_alabamas_bl.html

Confirmation of site selection for sensor placements: The CAB reviewed areas for temp/humidity sensor placement discussed at the April meeting. It was decided that places within Camden that are frequented and would be good for sensor placement include outside of Black Belt Treasures, the courthouse, the health department, near Piggly Wiggly grocery store. Sensor placement outside of Camden would include at the church across from the papermill (Yellow Bluff), outside of resident's home in Yellow Bluff, the Pine Hill Track, near the Golden Dragon facility, at BamaKids, and at Miller's Ferry Park. Ethel Johnson reported that she contacted and received permission to place sensors at the church located across from the papermill. It was decided that the VOC sensors should be placed at this location (along with a temp/humidity sensor).

Meeting schedule: The next meeting will be scheduled over the next couple of months, with the possibility of the next meeting as a conference call. A trip to download the data from the placed sensors and visit Bamakids to give a presentation on the data collected by the sensors was scheduled for July 7th.