

Press Release



Council on Library and
Information Resources

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Diana Martinez (312) 597-1830
diana.martinez@cityofchicago.org

Valencia preserves Chicago history with 800 newly digitized City Council audio recordings now available to the public

CHICAGO - Chicagoans now have an opportunity to take a deeper dive into the history of their city government as Clerk Anna Valencia will announce the launch of a webpage with more than 800 newly digitized audio recordings at 12:00 p.m. today during a panel discussion at Muse Coffee Studio.

Clerk Valencia will moderate the panel featuring former Alderwoman Helen Shiller, WVON Producer and Host Rufus Williams, and Dario Durham from 77 Flavors of Chicago. The panel will be streamed live at the following link <https://bit.ly/AudioArchive1>.

The page includes recordings, with captions, from 1970 to 2012, indexes to legislative documents, Journals of the Proceedings and links to resources for other important historical archives not kept by the Office of the City Clerk.

“This is an opportunity to dig into the history of our great city and spend some time reflecting on many of the events that made it what it is today,” Valencia said. “It’s especially important during this time in our nation’s history to sit with the complexity and discomfort of our past so that we are leading from a place of truth and understanding.”

The preservation of these records was made possible through a 2024 grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) that was awarded to the Office of the City Clerk for the project. Archival Specialist Matt Messbarger led the digitization efforts from applying for the grant to the publishing of the recordings on behalf of the City Clerk’s Office. Discussions in the audio recordings range from honoring Muddy Waters to a proposal to reject the Chicago Board of Education’s Desegregation Plan to the parking meter deal to honoring the Chicago Bulls’ third consecutive championship in 1993 and more.

Digitized City Council Archives are available at <https://www.chicityclerk.com/city-council-archival-resources>. To provide a more comprehensive resource for City Council records, the webpage also includes links to find City of Chicago documents before 1945, Chicago City Council

Proceedings from 1833-1871, how to access digital copies of the Journal of Proceedings from before 1981 and the Municipal Reference Collection at Chicago Public Library.

The Office of the City Clerk will be underscoring intriguing City Council historical events from the new recordings to give Chicagoans a broad understanding of what they cover via social media and more. For any questions about our collections, please contact us at our City Clerk Archives email: city_clerk_archives@cityofchicago.org.

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About the Office of the City Clerk

Led by Clerk Anna Valencia, the Office of the City Clerk is responsible for serving as the secretary of the City Council, administrator of the City's Wheel Tax, also known as a City Sticker, and administrator of Chicago's municipal ID, CityKey. The Office also partners with Chicago Public Schools on the NextGen youth civic engagement program, works with community partners on fines and fees reform and is a part of efforts to improve the lives of women and girls. Learn more about OCC at www.chicityclerk.com and connect with OCC on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

About the Council on Library and Information Resources

The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) is an independent, nonprofit organization that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning. To learn more, visit www.clir.org and follow CLIR on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).