

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Kristine Williams
Kristine.Williams@cityofchicago.org
312-744-2507 (office)
773-718-8467 (cell)

CITY CLERK LAUNCHES UNPRECEDENTED GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

Clerk del Valle Creates Online City Council Meeting Video Archive: Public to Have Access 24/7 to Watch City Council Meetings

Chicago, IL (March 15, 2010) – Chicago City Clerk Miguel del Valle's office announces a major step toward transparency in Chicago city government. Starting today, the public can watch City Council meetings live and on-demand through a new archive video page on the City Clerk website.

The City Council meeting video archive is the first of its kind in Chicago city government and allows residents to better track legislation and their elected representatives. In the past, video of the Council meetings could only be viewed live and the public could not access past meeting videos. Now, for example, residents can view the 2009 City Council budget debates. Or, in the near future, they can watch archived video of the swearing in for the new 1st and 29th Ward Aldermen.

"One of my goals is to bring more transparency and accessibility to city government. Posting the archived videos is one giant step towards this transparency goal," said Clerk del Valle. "The new video and audio archive of City Council meetings allows people who weren't able to watch the meeting live to now see and follow the meetings when it fits their schedule, whether that is at home, the office, school or the library. This is an invaluable tool for residents to track legislation that matters to them."

The archived video feature was created in collaboration with and through the recommendation of several community groups and leaders, including Professor and Head of the UIC Political Science Department and Former Chicago Alderman Dick Simpson, the Better Government Association, and the League of Women Voters.

"At the University of Illinois at Chicago we chronicle the votes and actions of the aldermen in the Chicago City Council," said Simpson. "The video archive that the City Clerk has created will make that task easier. Aldermen will become more accountable for what they say and how they vote representing the citizens in their wards and throughout the city. It is a new day for openness, transparency, and accountability."

"Transparency is the key to holding public officials accountable for their votes and their actions," said BGA Executive Director Andy Shaw, "and Clerk Del Valle has taken a major step in that direction by making the City Council accessible to city residents who can't watch the meetings live on their computers. Now it's time for the mayor and the aldermen to take the next reform step by airing the meetings on the city's cable access channels because much of the city still gets its information on television and not via computers."

The live and archived video and audio of Council meetings can be found at www.ChiCityClerk.com under the City Council drop down menu, Council Video option. Archived videos are posted within 5 days of the meeting. In the coming months upgrades will be made to improve the quality of these recordings.

- more -



About City Clerk del Valle

Miguel del Valle was elected as Clerk of the City of Chicago in 2007. City Clerk del Valle's office is responsible for maintaining official city government records, distributing approximately 1.3 million vehicle stickers and residential parking permits, and issuing city business licenses. City Clerk del Valle is bringing more efficiency and visibility to City Clerk services by providing greater access to public records, including web casting of City Council meetings, expanding community outreach programs, modernizing operations to expedite the sale of dog registrations, city stickers and residential parking. www.ChiCityClerk.com.

###