Twitter Thread by Chicago Documenters

Chicago Documenters
@CHIdocumenters

1/ While we wouldn’t do last year over again, #CHIdocumenters saw a lot happen in open meetings, local government and activism. So, before we put it behind us, here’s the story of 2020 through our eyes



2/ Back in January ‘20 #CHIdocumenters documented all meetings in person and had to navigate all that came with that...There's no one right way to run an open meeting but this setup wasn’t exactly "public-facing” / @rogueclown https://t.co/ae8xyorlYf

> The Cook County Board Room is always a frustrating room from an observer's perspective - the pictured seats are for the board, and an observer can't see all the name plates. pic.twitter.com/FOCVGWEj9d
>
> — nicolle neulist (@rogueclown) January 16, 2020

3/ #COVID19 was on the horizon—Dr. Allison Arwady called it at this @ChiPublicHealth meeting on February 19—but the average Chicagoan didn’t have an inkling of what would happen next / @britahunegs https://t.co/QEPVUgc2ZJ

> Okay this was a Chicago Dept of Public Health meeting from 2/19 quoting Health Commissioner Allison Arwady@CHIdocumenters pic.twitter.com/ROqsWMgILt
>
> — Brita (@britahunegs) November 23, 2020

4/ The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District @MWRDGC expected to celebrate every possible holiday this year in a similar fashion—how could it be otherwise? / @amelia_diehl https://t.co/goG3bUE0mU

> "That was an exciting meeting."@MWRDGC approves resolution recognizing Shannon Rovers Irish Bagpipe Band. The St Patrick's Day parade is scheduled for March 14 at 11:30am. A bandmember thanks the Board for taking the care of the water ... that is dyed green every year. pic.twitter.com/OFCVFtCgtE
>
> — Amelia Diehl (@amelia_diehl) March 5, 2020

5/ Independently, however, some public bodies were upping their government transparency game by proactively posting meeting materials and resources online (@ChicagoDPD) https://t.co/XYGi85lR3w

> Posting agenda materials and slideshows in a user-friendly format ahead of the #ChicagoPlanCommission meeting? 2020 looks good on you, @ChicagoDPD. https://t.co/QP9aMq7u8k pic.twitter.com/xFmNcYW110
>
> — Chicago Documenters (@CHIdocumenters) February 5, 2020

6/ To increase access to mental health services, Cook County planned to create video-call examining rooms where patients could access tele-health appointments / @RachelNaffziger https://t.co/XRnvRziCHo

> Currently they are discussing the five tele-psychiatry clinics proposed by Cook County Department of Public Health. It's a way to expand psychiatric access for a larger group of people. They clarified that one to one psychiatric care would not be done remotely.
>
> — Rachel Naffziger (@RachelNaffziger) February 11, 2020

7/ And the Regional Transportation Authority (@RTA_Chicago) was already trying to understand the long-term effects of a shift to more people working from home on @cta, @Metra & @PaceSuburbanBus / @morleydoc https://t.co/UOqynes2Uc

> RTA is tracking trends in commute modes. Very interesting stuff.
>
> Working from home has grown by 24% from 2013-2018, and taxi/uber usage has increased by 20%, resulting in decreases in ridership. pic.twitter.com/uQogwFtrGG
>
> — Morley Musick (@morleydoc) February 20, 2020

8/ Then concerns about #COVID19 started to grow… / @hcehogan https://t.co/ZMrFJsNgKr

> City Hall is still open in the time of COVID. I heard a City Council chambers security officer ask that people sit at least one seat away from one another. pic.twitter.com/QupLLYe8s6

— Tim Hogan (@hcehogan) March 16, 2020

9/ Things moved online... https://t.co/E46HJXh5Iv

\u274c Dozens of public meetings originally scheduled for this week have been canceled.

\u274c In-person quorum and public notice requirements in the Illinois Open Meetings Act are temporarily suspended.

Check out the first of three teleconference meetings we're covering this week \U0001f919 https://t.co/OSBGNtdlLW

— Chicago Documenters (@CHIdocumenters) March 25, 2020

10/ And government agencies had to adjust to a new normal. While the tech struggle was real… ■ / @hd_documenter https://t.co/ETp5fBKIBl

Now we're being told to text someone's number to ask for info to be able to be let into the meeting. One participant is getting frustrated: "Lord have mercy." We're still waiting to get texts back. Meanwhile no one responded to my request to join via Google Meet :(pic.twitter.com/yMT4gIagNF

— Helena Duncan (@hd_documenter) May 18, 2020

11/ Remote public meetings brought some welcome innovations, like usernames that made it easier to ID the speaker + close-ups of slides / @MegannHorstead https://t.co/4Ku5RQe3yo

The map, as Tovar indicates, shows the impact of air quality to the city's residents and business owners. pic.twitter.com/JEtCOe3gue

— Megann Horstead (@MegannHorstead) October 6, 2020

12/ And, as agencies got the hang of remote life, #CHIdocumenters covered more meetings than ever (600+). We documented… ■ ■

13/ Public bodies as they re-budgeted for a pandemic; South Shore Special Service Area (SSA 42) was quick to cancel its annual Summer Fest and redirect funds to support local businesses affected by the lockdown / @digitalSheila https://t.co/W8eJJ0QAZn

The meeting focused on ideation, a sense of urgency, a tiered approach for essential vs. non-essential businesses, surveying commissioners & entrepreneurs, developing a policy, a plan and method for monitoring. #SSA42 #COVID19Recovery

— Sheila Lewis (@digitalSheila) March 31, 2020

14/ @ChiPubSchools as it navigated the challenges of educating during a pandemic / @Rose26rv https://t.co/Qqsd5AOK9I

> McDade describi\xf3 el modelo de aprendizaje en casa. pic.twitter.com/rmmAHeARBz
>
> — Rocio Villase\xf1or (@Rose26rv) July 29, 2020

15/ City Council, @Chicago_Police and oversight agencies as they reckoned with the killing of #GeorgeFloyd, #BlackLivesMatter protests and police brutality / @newagehippie_ https://t.co/nbhB8C75m8

> @sheilabedi calls for the removal of #CPD officers that brutalize protesters. She said this summer will either go down as a continuation of the status quo or "this summer could go down in history as a turning point, and a time of transformation."
>
> — Bri Madden | #DefundCPD (@newagehippie_) August 19, 2020

16/ Years of effort by middle schoolers “tired of being called cute and smart” come to fruition in the official renaming of Douglas Park to honor Frederick Douglass / @gremlina333 https://t.co/KGgiJR0kiE

> Jamilla Hobbs is next. She's been organizing since she was in the 5th grade and is now in the 7th grade. "When we first spoke in front of the board in 2017, you said this was a great idea. The next year we were promised TIF funds from alderman Micheal Scott Jr. if we got enough--
>
> — Jonathan Lesbian Seagull (@gremlina333) March 11, 2020

17/ And 11 days and over 80 hours of city budget hearings, plus #PeoplesBudgetChicago conversations about what our communities need to be safe and thriving / @ahmad_sayles https://t.co/aYizx84SVd

> Gabriel and Charlie are debating whether it's important to have tax $ spent on policing and the carceral system. Charlie believes that we have to spend $ for better training. Gabriel believes that we need to put more resources in the budget for health. pic.twitter.com/W4su7ReTOy
>
> — Ahmad Sayles (@ahmad_sayles) September 27, 2020

18/ Here’s to each new day, healthy doses of skepticism and hope, and keeping our eye on the civic process. #CHIdocumenters

