



**PORTUGUESE AMERICAN CITIZENS  
COMMITTEE OF RHODE ISLAND, INC.  
PAWTUCKET, RHODE ISLAND**

**BY-LAWS**

Revised 1998, 2003, 2004, 2010

## **ARTICLE I: NAME/ ADDRESS**

Sec. 1: This organization shall be known as:

**“THE PORTUGUESE AMERICAN CITIZENS COMMITTEE OF  
RHODE ISLAND, INC.**

Sec. 2: The official address of the organization shall be such address in the State of Rhode Island as the Board of Directors, with the approval of the membership, shall from time to time designate. The legal address of the organization shall be designated on the organization’s annual filings with the Rhode Island Secretary Of State.

## **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

Sec. 1: Any individual and organization who expresses a commitment to the advancement of the cultural, social, and other objectives of the Portuguese American community may apply for membership in this organization.

Sec. 2: Nomination of proposed members to the organization will be made upon recommendation by the Membership Committee at a regular meeting of the Organization. Recommendation for acceptance of the proposed members shall be made after the Membership Committee has examined the information contained in the application for membership and the application has been properly cleared by the Committee. The Board of Directors shall approve the form for the application for membership.

The procedure for submission of an application shall be as follows:

- A. The application shall be submitted by the sponsor of the applicant to the President at a regular monthly meeting.

- B. The President shall place the application with the Membership Committee for clearance.
- C. Not sooner than next monthly meeting, the Membership Committee shall report to the President and the membership as to their recommendation for approval or disapproval of the applicant.
- D. If approved by the Membership Committee, the application shall be submitted to the body at said meeting, if approved by the body, the applicant shall be notified by the Secretary to attend the next regular monthly meetings for induction of the organization as provided by these By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS**

There shall be four (4) classifications of membership as follows:

- A. Active Member: A dues paying member who has been inducted as a result of the recommendation of the Membership Committee and accepted by the general membership. Active members shall have full voting rights and shall pay dues. Any full time college student under the age of 22 who is accepted for membership shall be exempt from dues while in full time student status.
- B. Honorary Member: Honorary membership may be bestowed on any person or organization designated for honorary membership by the vote of the active membership. Honorary members shall be non-voting members and shall not be responsible to pay dues.
- C. Lifetime Member: An active member who is sixty-five (65) years of age or older and has been an active member for five (5) or more years may apply for lifetime membership. Any person wishing to apply for lifetime membership shall notify the Board of Directors of their qualifications in writing and the Board shall certify the eligibility of said member at the next meeting. Lifetime members shall be exempt from paying dues, but shall enjoy full

voting rights.

- D. Organizational Member: The Committee will allow 1 (one) representative from any Portuguese American business, club, society and organization from the State of Rhode Island to assist in monthly assembly meetings. Organizations will be required to undergo the same nomination and application process as active members per *Article II, Sections 1 & 2*. Organizational members will be exempt from paying dues but will not enjoy full voting rights.

## **ARTICLE IV: PURPOSE**

Sec. 1: Among this organization's main purposes and functions are:

- A. To promote civic, cultural, economic and educational betterment of the Portuguese American community.
- B. To sponsor activities that will strengthen the prestige and social standing of the Portuguese American community.
- C. To respect and cause to be respected all Federal, State and Municipal laws.

Sec. 2: In promoting its civic and cultural missions, this organization will award the

Following recognitions:

- A. President's Award: The President may bestow a high honor on one (1) active or lifetime member who has demonstrated a great service to the organization through their endeavors. The choice of the award recipient will be left to the President's discretion. However, the Board of Directors may submit their recommendation during a Board of Directors meeting.
- B. Community Awards: The Committee will recognize individuals of various sectors of society that have made a positive impact to the Portuguese American community. These awards will be bestowed annually and an event

will be organized at the discretion of the Awards Chairperson. The *President's Award* will also be given simultaneously during the Community Awards event, if applicable. The five (5) community awards categories are:

- 1.) *Arts/Cultural;*
  - 2.) *Business;*
  - 3.) *Education;*
  - 4.) *Government;*
  - 5.) *Public Service*
- E. *Person of the Year:* The Committee will annually recognize an individual of good moral character, who has been sympathetic and supportive to the organization's mission, objectives and ethics. This individual will have a significant history of endeavors that made a positive contribution and betterment to the Portuguese American community. The award will be bestowed during an event, which will be organized at the discretion Person of the Year Chairperson.

## **ARTICLE V: GOVERNING BODY**

Sec. 1: The governing body of this organization shall be its Board of Directors, elected by the general membership as outlined in these bylaws.

Sec. 2: The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

- A. The Chairperson
- B. The President
- C. The Vice President
- D. The Secretary
- E. The Treasurer
- F. The Assistant Secretary
- G. The Assistant Treasurer
- H. The Immediate Past President

I. and J. Two members in good standing appointed by the Chairperson. The Chairperson and his two appointed directors may not hold a position as an officer but may be appointed as a Subcommittee Chairperson.

Sec. 3: Board of Directors Meetings: The Board of Directors shall meet at least twice a year to review and formulate the finances and policy of the organization and may meet at such other times as they deem appropriate for said purpose. The Chairperson of the Board will convene these meetings at his/her discretion. The above required meetings of the Board of Directors shall be in addition to regular membership meetings.

Sec. 4: Hierarchy

- A. Membership Meetings shall be chaired by the president.
- B. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall chair the meeting.
- C. In the absence of either of the above, the immediate past President shall chair the meeting.
- D. In the absence of all of the above, the Secretary shall chair the meeting.
- E. In the absence of all of the above, the Treasurer shall chair the meeting.
- F. In the absence of all of the above, the Assistant Secretary shall chair the meeting.
- G. In the absence of all of the above, the Assistant Treasurer shall chair the meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**

The Organization shall have the following standing committees:

- A. Sunshine Committee.
- B. Scholarship Committee.
- C. Membership Committee.
- D. Portuguese-American Viewpoint Committee.

E. Luso-American Development Foundation Committee.

The Board of Directors shall set the duties and activities of all committees.

In addition, the Organization shall have such other committees as the Board of Directors or President shall designate from time to time.

## **ARTICLE VII: FINANCES**

Sec. 1: Dues:

- A. Active members shall pay such dues as the membership shall from time to time adopt, but dues shall not be less than Twenty and 00/100 (\$20.00) Dollars a year.
- B. Dues shall be paid by all active members by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
- C. A special assessment may be imposed by the Board when necessary for the betterment of the committee. In the event a special assessment is imposed by the Board of Directors, members will be notified of said special assessment at least two (2) weeks prior to said assessment being due in advance by mail.
- D. Generally, all funds of the Organization shall be deposited in an FDIC or other federally insured institution.
- E. Notwithstanding the provisions of the previous paragraph, the Board may recommend investment of the Organization's funds in money markets or other securities. Said recommendation shall be made to the membership, and the membership shall vote on said recommendation.
- F. Members who have not paid dues for two (2) consecutive years shall be duly notified by the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary that they will be dropped from the membership rolls unless their dues are forthwith paid in full.
- G. Members with unpaid dues who have been dropped from membership and wish to be reinstated must pay all back dues and assessments for the past two (2) years and must be reinstated by membership vote.
- H. Newly admitted members shall pay their dues within thirty (30) days of their

acceptance to membership.

Sec. 2: Withdrawals and Check Writing:

- A. The organization shall require two (2) signatures on all checks or orders for money, and said signatures shall generally be that of the President and Treasurer. The Board of Directors may designate a third member to be authorized for check writing and orders for money, which member may sign in the absence of the President or Treasurer.
- B. The President has the authority to order the expenditure of up to One Hundred and 00/100 (\$100.00) Dollars for a worthwhile expenditure he designates. Any such expenditure shall be accounted for to the treasury and to the membership at the next membership meeting. All other expenditures shall be proposed to the membership for approval prior to being made.

## **ARTICLE VIII: ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Sec. 1: Nomination:

- A. The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee, which committee shall make its recommendations for officers/Chairperson of the Board at the November meeting each year.
- B. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at said meeting as long as said floor nominations follow the procedure set forth herein.
- C. All nominations for office must be seconded by at least one (1) member in good standing before being considered.

Sec. 2: Elections:

- A. Elections of members to their respective offices shall be made in December of each year.
- B. Elections of officers shall be made by secret ballot if requested by the majority of the members present and voting.
- C. Simple majority of votes is sufficient to be elected to any office.
- D. All officers/members of the Board of Directors shall be elected for a period of

one (1) year or until they resign or are replaced by the Board pursuant to these By-Laws.

- E. Officers and members of the Board of Directors shall be of Portuguese descent, as defined from time to time by resolution of the Organization.

Sec. 3: Vacancies:

In the event an vacancy occurs on the Board of Directors, the President (or presiding officer of the Organization) shall be allowed to fill said vacancy by nominating a member to the vacant office until the membership has conducted an election to fill said vacancy. The President shall have the authority to declare a vacancy in a particular office if the holder of said office has missed more than five (5) meetings in a row. Any vacancy shall be filled only for the remaining term of that office.

## **ARTICLE IX: INDUCTIONS**

Sec. 1: Induction of officers to their respective offices shall be made in January of each year, following the annual election.

Sec. 2: The retiring President shall appoint a committee of at least four (4) members to prepare suitable exercises for the induction of the newly elected officers.

Sec. 3: The membership will determine the amount of money which is to be spent for said induction of officers.

Sec. 4: After proper clearance by Membership Committee, a newly elected member to this organization shall be inducted by the President or his designated representative, at the first regular meeting after his nomination, election acceptance to membership in this organization.

Sec. 5: Following his election to membership a new elected member will be officially presented to the Assembly by the President.

## **ARTICLE X: CONDUCT OF MEETINGS/PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES**

Meetings, votes and actions by the Board and membership shall follow parliamentary procedure as designated in the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order, and these By-Laws hereby incorporate said Rules of Order by reference.

## **ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS**

These By-Laws may be amended from time to time by a majority vote of the members. A member who wishes to propose an amendment to these By-Laws shall do so in writing to the President. The President shall meet with the Board and make a recommendation or refer the proposal for an amendment to these By-Laws to a committee appointed by the President. The committee so appointed shall meet, consider the amendment, and report back to the membership with its recommendation. The membership shall then vote on the proposed By-Law amendment.

## **ARTICLE XII: RESIGNATION AND RE-INSTATEMENT**

Sec. 1: Any person desiring resignation from membership of this organization is required to submit a letter stating his termination. Such letter will be addressed to the President and presented to the Assembly. Subsequently, the Secretary will remove this individual from membership list.

Sec 2: Any person, who was member of this organization and who thereafter desires to be reinstated needs to submit a written letter to the organization. Reinstatement needs the majority approval of the Assembly presented during a meeting. Upon approval,

reinstatement will be immediate and the Secretary will add such individual to the membership list.

### **ARTICLE XIII: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

1. An officer or member of the Board of Directors may be removed for cause by a majority vote at a special meeting of the membership held for that purpose only.
2. Similarly, a member may be expelled from membership for cause at a special meeting of the membership called in the manner and with the same formality as mandated by the meetings to remove officers or directors.