



Minutes

2025 Annual Contas Meeting-

Jan 26, 2025

The Annual Contas Meeting of the Board of Directors of the United Portuguese S.E.S. Inc. was held on the premises of the U.P.S.E.S. Hall on Sunday, January 26th, 2025.

President Babita Souza called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm. Asked the general assembly for a moment of silence for the sick and deceased members of our community.

- a. Therese Garces read the Mission Statement.
- b. Juliette Turner led the Opening Prayer.
- c. Babita Souza led the Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the Portuguese Flag.

Roll call Done by Juliette Turner

Attendance: Absent: n/a

Present: Marissa Bagaso(zoom), Annette Balelo, Berlyn Balelo, Ashley Barandiaran, Tamy Branstetter, Darlene Byrne, Sean Cerny, Ricardo da Rosa, Cici Drummond, Jeanette Finete, Therese Garces, Tyler Goulart, Deo Holmquist, Barbara Hosaka, Jenna Lococo, Kelly Madruga, Jacquelyn Neves, Grace Rosa, Bridget Schoeffel, Yvonne Siragusa, Babita Souza, Juliette Turner, Dinisa Valadao, Natalie A. Virissimo, Mary Jane Warren

General Members Attendance: 94 members present

Review of Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting:

Motion made by Dinisa Valadao, seconded by Tamy Branstetter, to adopt the agenda moving the five-year plaques presentation and the scholarships presentation after the president's report. Discussion was made. Motion was Carried via show of hands.

Motion made by Daniel Silva, seconded by Diana Balelo, to suspend the reading of the minutes. Motion Carried.

Discussion was made.

Motion made by Evelyn Feliciano, seconded by Dinisa Valadao, to amend the minutes dispense reading and remove the 1st paragraph. Motion Carried.



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A lengthy Discussion was made.

Karianna Feliciano Called to Question- Motion Carried

2024 Festa President's Report: Brennand & Bridget Schoeffel spoke to the community about how thankful they were for everyone's help and participation in their festa. It was an honor to do this for you all—so much appreciation and gratitude to everyone and the current board of directors and to the incoming. The 2024 Festa presidents brought in a net profit of \$241,705 to the hall.

2025 Festa President's Report: Darlene & Jason Byrne thanked the 2024 Festa Presidents for passing the torch to them and giving them the courage to the Festa. She also said how her family showed her love for the hall and festa. Her four fundraisers so far have raised \$21K for Cork & Brew, \$23K for Golf, and \$15K sold out for Brunch with Santa and Crab Feast, with three fundraisers as of now with a net total of \$60K. Darlene Byrne introduced her daughter, Queen Ava Marie Byrne, who was in attendance, and then read off her 2025 royalty.

Treasurer's Report: Natalie A. Virrisimo, gave her report, The UPSES INC (this includes Festa, Trinity Sunday, Filarmonica, Portuguese-American

Dancers, Romarias, and Park Fund) have a net profit of \$69,273, compared to a budgeted net profit of \$124,350. The UPSES Hall (this excludes Festa, Trinity Sunday, Filarmonica, Portuguese American Dancers, Romaria, and Park Fund) ended the year with a net loss of \$108,452, compared to a budgeted loss of \$76,650. Enclosed in this packet are the Balance Sheet and Income Statement for the entire corporation as of December 2024, as well as the Income Statement of the UPSES Hall alone, without subsidiaries. I have also enclosed a report on the Bar, BINGO, Portuguese Market, and Property Rentals. On the Balance Sheet Comparison (without Festa) the Total Assets of the Corporation increased by \$121,688. The Rental Property across the street had a cash surplus of \$62,308. A report on the major operating expenses of the hall alone is also included. In 2024, we show the major operating expenses are 50% of our total



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expenses. I would like to congratulate Brennand and Bridget Schoeffel for a job well done for Festa 2024 and welcome Jason and Darlene Byrne as our Festa Presidents for 2025, with a net income of \$69,273.

Motion made by Daniel Silva, seconded by Evelyn Feliciano, to accept the treasurer's report as written. Discussion was made. Motion Carried.

Manager's Report: Andrea DaLuz read her report that 2024 members' rentals were 110, Nonmembers were 51 rentals, with a total of 161 for the year. 2024 was down about two events to last year, with a total for 2024 was \$68,730.

President's Report: U.P.S.E.S Inc. President Babita Souza. Boa noite e bem vindos. Good evening, everyone, and Welcome to Contas night.

Let me start by giving you a glimpse into who I am and into how my year as your president.

I immigrated from the main land City of Setubal with my parents back in 1971 it took us a couple of years of waiting and mountains of paper work to make it to the United States but we made it.

On my paternal side I came from a long line of fisherman and although my dad was the only one in the family that was not a fisherman he always had a dream of becoming one, we called it a Capricho .

My family here, the Graca Fuzeta family owned tuna per seiners and my dad embarked on his dream with my mom and myself in tow.

I am proud to have made San Diego my second home never forgetting MY roots in Portugal.

I went to School here and made many lifelong friends.

I worked in many sectors where my love of people came into play.

Met my husband Tony Souza in 1977 and started our family.

We have 3 beautiful daughters and 4 amazing grandchildren that is my family history.



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This hall has been a part of this journey and I am very thankful for it and I am glad to be able to give back.

2024 was a memorable year for me and my family. When I was entrusted with the honor of overseeing the daily operations of our beloved Hall In my efforts to preserve and protect the Hall's Mission. To support the many community events, fundraisers and celebrations that represents our Portuguese Heritage.

Throughout the year and against much adversity I still feel it was all worth it as it was all for the greater good of the hall and community.

I have strived to also ensure the Corporation in which it operates by upholding its many responsibilities with integrity, fiscal responsibility and transparency. Unfortunately we have had a board divided that has not been helpful in doing so. We have had motions that restrained my ability to do my job. Including cut to a thousand dollar discretionary limit , inability to seek counsel with our retained lawyer and needless motions to stop business from moving forward.

The preservation of this Hall is of paramount importance, and for too long there's been benign neglect and we need to continue to ensure that regular maintenance is up kept. I think we were successful in doing so.

The roof was repaired, we have a new beautiful bar top, new bar lighting and bar fans, and an updated information TV that welcomes patrons and introduces our board to the general public.

A new ramp for easy entrance access by the market, A new stainless steel wash station in the kitchen and A new state of the art Barbeque.

Two of our rental properties were totally refurbished they look beautiful, with all new privacy fencing.

A new trash removal contract with a company we can depend on.

A new shed to house our 250 newly cleaned and repaired foldable chairs.

A new UPSES sign was installed on the shelter Island entrance also new landscaping upgrades throughout the hall and rental properties ,immense cleaning and trash removal took place throughout the facility inside and out. A new clean bill of health for our Kitchen and under stage area. New door openers new door stoppers ,new electric



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upgrades, A new stainless steel prep table for our kitchen, new cutlery, new baking pans and small appliances, new Keurig professional coffee machine in Bar A new office rug.

Cleaned and organize hallway closets , clean and sanitized boiler room.

Cleaned, labeled and organized kitchen cabinets, deep clean of kitchen doors walls, ceilings, ceiling vents ,floors ,refrigerators ,walk in refrigerator , clean all stainless steel surfaces and let's not forget new kitchen chairs. And many other items

To say it takes a Village is an understatement ' A big Thank you to the many volunteers on the maintenance committee Tony Souza, Manuel Balelo, Matt Madruga, Frank Oliveira, Albert Silva that give of themselves so unselfishly and to all other volunteers' to many to mention. Thank you for supporting my vision this year.

I respect and appreciate your hard work and your expertise in addressing and mitigating the cost of operations and repairs. A thank you is never going to be enough. I trust you continue to support us on these goals for many years to come. You are the glue that keeps this hall standing.

I recognize that Bingo ,the Portuguese market ,Hall rentals and rental properties play a major role in the continued success of our Hall. I want to give a special thank you to Bingo for an outstanding year!!!

As far as long term planning my wish is that we all can focus on ways to bring a healthy flow of revenue for years to come with ideas coming to realization. Especially the outdoor Café we need board members that are passionate innovators, thinkers, shakers and movers, who are willing to think outside of the box and work well it with new ideas and each other.

To my board of directors and the many members of the committees and groups I recognize and appreciate your support and dedication but especially you're LOYALTY to the mission we uphold to serve this corporation and the community it serves.

To the community let your voices be heard, get involved, be the change you want to see. This is your Hall, don't let any individual's stop you from becoming involved and making a change. Change is Good, change is Healthy.



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For me, this year has been an eye opener where friends and foes were concerned. I continue to rise above bad behavior and believe you will answer to a higher power.

I definitely felt the Holy Spirit all around me protecting me and guiding me and my faith, family and friends kept me on course. Thank you

From all that was accomplished I am most proud of the completion of our Code of Ethics which is imperative for the protection of our Non-Profit Status here at the Hall.

I want to recognize my board of Governors Chair Cici Drummond for all the hard work and dedication as we worked closely together with our Non Profit attorney Nikki Semanchik to ensure the policies and procedures which had not been updated since 2014 were brought to up to date. This includes resolving conflicts of interest, reimbursement policies, Festa guidelines & discrepancies in the Bylaws. These updates which will create more transparency, accountability and fiscal responsibility across all our groups ,organizations and clubs. This should be a work in progress every year.

To the Clubs and Subsidiaries no matter where in Portugal you originated you are welcoming and inclusive to all who visit us let me start by saying it was a delight to be part of all your events and to watch how you give of yourselves but most importantly how you pour your heart and souls into keeping these clubs alive and continuing our traditions. You are what started this Institution and I want you to know we appreciate you and will continue to support you in every way we can 1000 percent.

A big Thank you To the past presidents and board members that gave me an ear and support throughout this year, you have no idea how your support was appreciated .

To Isabel Serpa, who I've known since she was a little girl, Thank you for all the years of hard work you put in for our Hall's Market. We all know you went well above all expectations you were number one in customer service with your welcoming smile. Our customers still ask about you all the time and miss you very much. I know you going through a rough patch right now but I'm confident you will come out victorious.

May the Holy Spirit bless you with much Health and Happiness.

Thank you to the office team .

To Andrea Da Luz, who's been here for 24 years and continues to do her multi faceted job running the daily operations of our Hall. It doesn't go unnoticed; I want everyone to know you are a integral part of the operation of this Institution.



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Throughout the year and since I've been a part of this hall every time I needed anything your answer was always "Yes of course" Obrigado.

To the Bartenders and Maintenance team, thank you for working with me to update, maintain and ensure the operation of our Bar. Your smile and great attitude are welcoming to our community and team here at the Hall. We are proud of the new upgrades and additions to the Bar.

To the Joe and Carla Luz family team we are grateful for all the amazing work you have all done, along with the Siragusa Landscape Company for working with me and doing such a great job.

To the Schoeffel Family congratulations on hosting our 2024 festa it was a beautiful success!

And congratulations to the Byrne family I will continue to support you as you take the torch and host this year's Festa I wish you continued Success.

To the generous donors that support us every year a Big Thank you we couldn't do it without you.

Finally to my husband Tony Souza for standing with me day in and day out of this role I accepted without hesitation and with love and support you were there to help me on this journey. You have been a beacon of light and I thank you and love you. In Closing,

"I believe that together we Did great things" Babita Souza Presidente

Scholarship Presentation: Annette Balelo presented the scholarship to the students. It is with great pleasure that tonight we will award four fantastic recipients of the UPSES Inc. Scholarship with a \$1000.00 check to honor them for their outstanding accomplishments throughout high school. Tonight, our recipients are as follows:

Natayla Gouveia

Ava Rosa Jones

Victoria Jorge

Nathan Terzoli

In 2019, The Kenny Alameda scholarship was created by the Alameda Family to honor Kenny Alameda. Kenny has personally committed to donating \$1000.00 per year to one



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high school senior. After reviewing applications, Kenny has chosen to personally award all applicants a scholarship, and additionally, he has decided to award one outstanding applicant a \$5000.00 scholarship. This year, Natalya Gouveia will be awarded \$5000.00 for her accomplishments, and Ava Rosa Jones and Nathan Terzoli will also be awarded \$1000.00 each. A special thanks to all applicants who took the time to apply for our scholarships. We would also like to thank Kenny and Kathy Alameda for their continued support, generous donations, and those who contributed. In the end, one student was in attendance, Nathan Terzoli, who thanked the community personally. Cici Drummond read the letter on behalf of Ava Rosa, along with Natalya Gouveia's parents spoke on her behalf.

Five-Year Plaques Presentation: President Babita Souza's presentation on Five-Year Plaques to Sean Cerny, Cici Drummond, Marissa Bagaso, Natalie A Virissimo, Yvonne Siragusa, and Jaquelyn Neves.

Old Business: None to report or discuss.

New Business:

Motion made by Karianna Feliciano, seconded by Cici Drummond, to put a baby changing table in the men's restroom. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Cici Drummond, seconded by Daniel Silva, to make a bylaw change to Article 9, Section 7, Point 1, now reads, "The President has the authority to appoint the Parliamentarian and three Directors to serve on the Management Committee as described in Article Ten, Section Three Below." However, Article Ten Section Three states, "The Management Committee shall be comprised of the Four officers of the organization, two (2) other Board Members appointed by the president, the Parliamentarian, and the immediate Past President. Would like to Amend Article 10, Section 2 to read "The Management Committee shall be comprised of the Four officers of the organization, three (3) other Board Members appointed by the president, the Parliamentarian, and the immediate Past President" Discussion was made. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Cici Drummond, seconded by Diana Balelo, to make a bylaw change to Article 9, section 8 now reads "In order to serve as an officer, an individual must serve two (2) cumulative years during his or her lifetime as a member of the Board of Directors before eligible to serve in the capacity of an officer." Would like to



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propose a by-law change that reads, "In order to serve as an officer in the position of President or Vice President, an individual must serve two (2) cumulative years during his or her lifetime as a member of the Board of Directors before eligible to serve in the capacity of said officer. To serve as an officer in the position of Secretary or Treasurer, an individual must serve one (1) year during his or her lifetime as a member of the Board of Directors before being eligible to serve in the capacity of said officer." Discussion was made. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Tony Souza, seconded by Daniel Silva, to raise the Presidential Discretionary fund back to the original \$5K.

Motion to amend made by Dinisa Valadao, Tony Souza, and Daniel Silva agreed with the amended motion to add in "emergency" to the original motion to read the Presidential discretionary "emergency" fund back to the original \$5K. Motion Carried.

Ricardo Sousa approached the mic to read a letter that had been presented to the board in previous months. Cici Drummond read the response letter that had been sent to him.

Motion made by Juliana Piatek, seconded by Dinisa Valadao that all board of directors' minutes be published to the website before the next meeting. Discussion was made. Motion Rescinded.

Motion made by Tony Souza, seconded by Julianna Piatek, to allow the president to call any legal representation as they feel to make an educated decision. A very lengthy discussion was made. Motion defeated.

Motion made by Julianna Piatek, seconded by Tony Souza, to make a by-law change to Article 8, section 8. Election of board Officers now reads as "Immediately after the annual meeting of the members or thereafter as soon as mutually convenient, they newly elected board of directors shall convene and select from said board of directors, the president, the vice president, secretary and treasurer of the corporation (the "Executive officers"). Would like to Amend Article 8, Section 8 to read, "Immediately after the annual meeting of the members or thereafter as soon as mutually convenient, the General Assembly shall convene and select from said board of directors, the president, the vice president, secretary and treasurer of the corporation (the "Executive officers"). Discussion was made.

Daniel Silva Called to Question. Motion Carried



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Julianna Piatek made the original motion. Motion Defeated.

Motion made by Geri Lauriano, seconded by Tony Souza, to conduct an outside audit of the Hall, Bingo, Festa, Market, Bar, and organization. Discussion was held.

Motion made by Patty Pactanac, seconded by Daniel Silva, to get an estimated cost to do an outside outside. Motion rescinded.

An amended Motion was made by Geri Lauriano, seconded by Tony Souza, to conduct an internal audit of the Hall, Bingo, Festa, Market, Bar, and organization for the last 2 years (2023-2024) Motion Carried.

Motion made by Evelyn Felciano, seconded by Lynn Guidi, to create an advisory committee of all past presidents. Motion Carried

Non-Member Margaret Virissimo read a personal statement to the general assembly and board of directors. During this statement, she produced an audio recording of a current board member, Ricardo da Rosa, who stated, "I did not give authorization for me to be recorded."

Dinisa Valadao requested to be noted in the minutes that there was no bullying, no incident, and no documented harassment during Festa.

Motion made by Lynn Guidi, seconded by Dinisa Valadao that no increases in the rates for the clubs and organizations. Motion Carried.

President called intermission at 10:05 pm. Intermission was 10 mins.

President called the meeting to order at 10:15 pm.

Approval of new members: Motion made by Juliette Turner, seconded by Daniel Silva to accept the following new members: Matteo Camacho-Bier, Alexandria Souza Goodwin, Maria Oliveira, David Mello Tavares, Patricia Pactnac, Michelle Disbrow, Maria Silva, Lawrence Correia. Motion Carried.

Presentation of Candidates for the 2025 Board of Directors: Read by Cici Drummond, Chairs of Board of Governors.: Jocelyn Neves, David Mello Tavares, Michelle Disbrow, Andra Brito-Bokosky, Chris Da Rosa, Maria Silva, Matteo Camacho-Bier, Jacqulyn Giaquinto, Jordan Theirry, Marissa Bagaso, Annette Balelo, Berlyn Balelo, Ashley Barandiaran, Tamy Branstetter, Darlene Byrne, Sean Cerny, Ricardo da Rosa, Cici Drummond, Jeanette Finete, Therese Garces, Tyler Goulart,



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Deo Holmquist, Barbara Hosaka, Jenna Lococo, Kelly Madruga, Jacquelyn Neves, Grace Rosa, Bridget Schoeffel, Yvonne Siragusa, Babita Souza, Juliette Turner, Dinisa Valadao, Natalie A. Virissimo, Mary Jane Warren.

Motion made by Dinisa Valadao, seconded by Karianna Feliciano to accept the new slate as presented. Motion Carried.

Nomination of Candidates from the Floor: President Babita Souza opened the general assembly floor to nominations.

Diana Balelo, Alexandria Souza Goodwin, Tess Bloom, Jeanette Simoes, Pamela Rodrigues, Ricardo Sousa, Karianna Feliciano, Gina Serpa, Patty Pactanac, Julianna Piatek, Bridgette Mack all accepted nominations.

Tony Souza, Cecilia Santos, and Daniel Silva all declined.

Having no other floor nominations from the floor, President Babita Souza closed the floor.

President Babita Souza made a voting committee consisting of Geri Lauriano, Cecilia Santos, Annette Gafa, Maria Oliviera, and Mark Silva.

Motion made by Juliette Turner, seconded by Therese Garces, to have the Parliamentarian on the voting committee to promote truth, transparency, and consistency. Motion Carried.

The parliamentarian created ballots. During this time, Committee reports were given. Committee reports were submitted to the general assembly via website and packets that night.

Committee Reports:

1. Acquisition: Ricardo da Rosa spoke to the general assembly about why this committee is here. The account currently has 2.8 million dollars. If anyone wants to donate to this fund, please consider.
2. Bar: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
3. Bingo: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
4. Finance & Long-term Planning: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.



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5. Chapel: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
6. Community Functions: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
7. Festa Coordinating: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
8. Marketing: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
9. Permits: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
10. The Portuguese Market: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
11. Property Management: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
12. Scholarship: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
13. Security: Sean Cerny gave a personal statement to the general assembly.
Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
14. Weekly Queens/Kings: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.

Affiliate Reports:

1. The Portuguese American Dancers: Submitted report via website and packet.
No questions were asked.
2. Trinity Sunday: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.
3. Filarmonica Uniao Portuguesa de San Diego: Submitted report via website and packet. No questions were asked.

Motion made by Dinisa Valadao, seconded by Evelyn Feliciano to accept all new members who signed the book. Motion Carried.

Voting rules were given to the general assembly and the board of directors. Ballots were presented one by one. 100 ballots were created, and 96 ballots were given out.



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Introduction of the 2025 Board of Directors:

Annette Balelo

Berlyn Balelo

Diana Balelo

Ashley Barandarian

Matteo Camacho-Bier

Tess Bloom

Andrea Brito-Bokosky

Tamy Branstetter

Darlene Byrne (2025 Festa President)

Christian DaRosa

Ricardo da Rosa

Karianna Feliciano

Jeanette Finete

Therese Garces

Jacquelyn Giaquinto

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Grace Rosa

Maria Silva

Jeanette Simoes

David Mello Tavares

Jordan Theirry

Dinisa Valadao

Mary Jane Warren

The motion made by Dinisa Valadao, seconded by Tyler Goulart, to accept the written ballots, save them in the safe for 30 days, and destroy them along with the voting committee is to be dismissed. Motion Carried.

No further business was discussed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted by

Juliette Turner, Secretary, UPSES INC