

North Vassalboro Village Cemetery Rules and Regulations

The Town of Vassalboro, Maine, owns and operates a cemetery, known as the “North Vassalboro Village Cemetery” on Cemetery Street in the village of North Vassalboro. Its purpose is to provide reasonably priced cemetery lots for its citizens and their families. Interment in the cemetery also includes perpetual care.

In order to properly administer this valuable community facility, the Town has adopted the following rules to assure proper record keeping, reasonable upkeep, security and care over time. The Town recognizes that families of persons buried in the cemetery often have differing views and taste as to the appropriate nature of grave markers and floral decorations. However, there are some limits described in these rules whose purpose is to maintain some uniformity of appearance and to minimize obstructions which may make it difficult for proper mowing and upkeep of the grounds over time. These rules and regulations, including amendments thereto, constitute the sole agreement between the Town of Vassalboro, and lot owners.

Section 1. General Rules

- a. Cemetery information may be accessed on the Town website and at the Town Office during their regular business hours. The cemeteries will be open from 7:00 a.m. to sunset each day, weather permitting. The avenues within the cemetery are not plowed in the winter.
- b. All fees or charges for each 4’x10’ cemetery lot are payable at the Town Office. Fees are set by the Board of Selectmen or their designee and amended from time to time. Interment fees including grave digging are not included in the lot fee.
- c. Persons within the cemeteries shall use only the avenues, walks, and alleys. The Town expressly disclaims responsibility for injury sustained by any person violating this rule.
- d. Persons visiting the cemeteries or attending funerals are strictly prohibited from picking flowers, wild or cultivated, breaking or injuring any tree, shrub, or plant, or from writing upon, defacing, or injuring any memorial, fence or other structure within the grounds of the cemeteries.
- e. No domestic animals will be allowed outside vehicles in cemeteries at any time, unless on a leash and on the roadways only. Owners must properly dispose of dog waste.
- f. Off-road recreational vehicles are prohibited within the cemetery.

Section 2 – Lot Ownership

- a. Persons desiring to purchase lots should visit the cemeteries where the Town staff will aid them in making a selection. Rules relating to such lots will be explained and a copy of these rules and regulations will be made available to prospective purchasers.
- b. The purchase price must be paid in full at time of purchase, and receipt for such purchase price will be given to the purchaser at that time. Description of lots contained in such deeds shall be in accordance with cemetery lots, which are kept on file in the Town Office. **It shall be the duty of the lot owner to notify the Town Office of any change in address after purchase.**
- c. All reasonable precautions will be taken to protect lot owners and the property rights of lot owners within the cemeteries from loss or damage, but the Town will not be responsible for loss or damage from causes beyond their reasonable control.

Section 3 – Care of Lots

- a. The general care of the cemetery is the responsibility of the Town of Vassalboro and includes reasonable and practical care of all areas of the cemetery, such as park and lawn area, roads, shrubs and trees. The Town reserves the right to perform necessary maintenance over time.
- b. No lot or grave shall be defined by a fence, rail, curb, hedge, trees, or shrubs for the purpose of describing its corners or boundaries.

Section 4 – Interments

- a. All funeral ceremonies conducted in the cemetery shall abide by the rules and regulations.
- b. All orders for interments in lots must be signed by the owner of the lot, or his authorized representative. When this is impossible because of absence from the Town, faxed or verbal permission will be accepted in lieu of signed authorization.
- c. When an interment is to be made in a lot, the location of such interment shall be designated by the lot owner, or an authorized representative, and the Town Office designee will mark the lot with stakes for the grave digger. Should they fail or neglect to make such designation, the Town reserves the right to make the interment in a location designated by the Town. The Town shall not be responsible for errors from telephone information lacking precise and proper instructions as to the particular space, size of grave, and location in a lot, where is desired.
- d. Once arrangements have been made, graves for casket burials will be opened by a Town

permitted gravedigger in the sole and exclusive judgment of the Town that such opening is proper, necessary, and duly authorized.

- e. When the Town is directed to make a disinterment by an order of a court of duly competent jurisdiction and a certified copy of such order has been filed with the Town Office, it may do so. In all cases the responsibility of the Town shall be limited to arranging for the opening of the grave only and the person duly authorized to do so must make the actual disinterment. Fees for such disinterment will be paid by those requiring it and not by the Town.
- f. Interment of cremains is permitted. Multiple cremains within one lot are permitted. Urns for containers of ashes maybe interred by the family or designee but the same requirements are necessary for verification of lots and reporting to the Town Office. Family members must insure that the soil placed over the urn is compacted and that the sod is replaced level with the surrounding ground surface so as to avoid the appearance of a sunken grave over time. Only one above ground monument is permitted per lot. Ground level markers on lots with multiple cremains are permitted.
- g. The Town reserves the right to insist upon at least twenty-four (24) hours notice of any interment.
- h. In general, winter burials are prohibited.

Section 5 – Plants, Shrubs, Flowers and Decorations

- a. No individual beds of shrubbery or flowers shall be permitted on the grounds of the cemetery. Planting of trees and invasive plants in the cemetery is prohibited. Live plants, contiguous to and in front of monuments are permitted. The Town is not responsible for maintaining such plants.
- b. No glass jars, metal receptacles, or breakable flower containers shall be placed permanently on lots. We ask that family members remove temporary gravesite decorations and displays annually. Such decorations should be removed from the cemetery grounds; there are no refuse containers in the cemetery. Disposal of old decorations and displays along the perimeter of the cemetery grounds are strictly prohibited. (Many such displays today often contain artificial flowers or plants. It is especially important for families to remove all such items and not allow them to be left in the environment). The Town reserves the right to remove and dispose of any remaining gravesite decorations from the previous season after April 1 of each year to allow for normal mowing and clean up.

Section 6 – Monuments, Tombs, and Other Structures

- a. The owner of any lot shall have the right to erect one monument, no wider than 36" or 75% of the width of the lot(s). Other temporary markers as provided by Funeral Homes are permitted until a permanent marker can be installed. **Any location of a monument must be approved by the Town Office.** (Rev. 2/7/2011)

Section 7 – Descent of Title

- a. The laws of the State of Maine govern the descent of title to cemetery lots, as well as other matters relating to their ownership. It is important that on the death of an owner of a lot, the heirs or devisees of such person should file in the Town Office full proof of ownership for the purpose of correcting the record. Notarized statements as to relationship and certified copies of Wills are normally sufficient.

No cemetery lots shall be resold without the approval and right of first refusal by the Town of Vassalboro.

Section 8 – Correction of Errors

- a. The Town reserves the right to correct any errors that may be made by them in making interments, disinterment, or removal, or in the description, transfer, or conveyance of any lot. Errors made by lot owners in location of monument or marker foundation positions or if a change is requested, will be the cause for an additional charge once work is in progress by the Town.
- b. The Selectmen hereby expressly reserve the right to adopt additional Rules and Regulations or to amend, alter or repeal any Rule or Regulation, or any portion thereof, at any time.

These rules adopted by the Vassalboro Board of Selectmen on November 18, 2010.