

TOWN OF VASSALBORO MAINE

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TOWN OF VASSALBORO, MAINE

Cemetery Rules

(Revised Dec. 14, 2023)

The Town of Vassalboro, Maine, owns and operates several cemeteries throughout the town, all of which are subject to these rules. Its purpose is to provide reasonably priced cemetery lots for its citizens and their families. Interment in the cemetery also includes perpetual care. Perpetual care includes mowing the grass and maintaining veterans' stones.

In order to properly administer these valuable community facilities, 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 cemeteries 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. The 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. Vassalboro has twenty-seven town-maintained cemeteries. See attached map for the locations of these cemeteries. All cemeteries will be open from 7:00 am to sunset each day, weather permitting. The avenues within the cemeteries are not plowed in the winter.
- b. All fees for each individual 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. As of November 13, 2023, lots can only be purchased in the Cross Hill and North Vassalboro Village Cemeteries.
- c. Persons within the cemetery shall use only the avenues, roads, and walkways, and no one is permitted to walk upon or cross lots or lawns unless it is necessary to do so to gain

access to one's own lot 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 memorials, 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 roadways only. Owners must properly dispose of dog waste.
- f. Off-road recreational vehicles and snowmobiles are prohibited within the cemetery.
- g. Underage children must be under supervision of an adult.
- h. No hunting is allowed in the cemeteries.
- i. Contact the Town Office with any questions regarding the cemeteries or cemetery rules.

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. A receipt and a lot conveyance form for such purchase price will be given to the purchaser at that time. **It shall be the duty of the lot owner to notify the Town Office of any change in address after purchase.**
- c. The maximum number of lots that may be purchased at any one time is four.
- d. 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 or personal injury liability.
- e. 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.

- f. Lots can be returned to the Town for the original purchase price only by the original purchaser of the lot.
- g. Lots cannot be resold. Lots can be transferred or freely given to someone other than the original purchaser, but **the Town must be informed of this transfer.**

Section 3- Interments

- a. Only human remains may be interred in the cemeteries.
- b. All funeral ceremonies conducted in the cemeteries shall abide by the rules and regulations.
- c. Once arrangements have been made, **graves for casket burials will be opened by a Town permitted gravedigger in the sole and exclusive judgement of the Town that such opening is proper, necessary, and duly authorized.** Payments for grave opening services are handled by the funeral home or directly with family members, not through the Town.
- d. 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.
- e. Interment of cremains is permitted. Up to four cremains within one lot are permitted. One full casket burial and up to three cremains within one lot is permitted. Urns for containers of ashes may be 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 ensure 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. Cremains should be buried at least three (3') feet deep. Only one above ground monument is permitted per lot. Ground level markers on lots with multiple cremains are permitted.
- f. The Town reserves the right to insist upon at least twenty-four hours' notice of any interment.
- g. In general, burials are permitted at any time, dependent on ground conditions.

Section 4 - Plants, Shrubs, Flowers, and Decorations

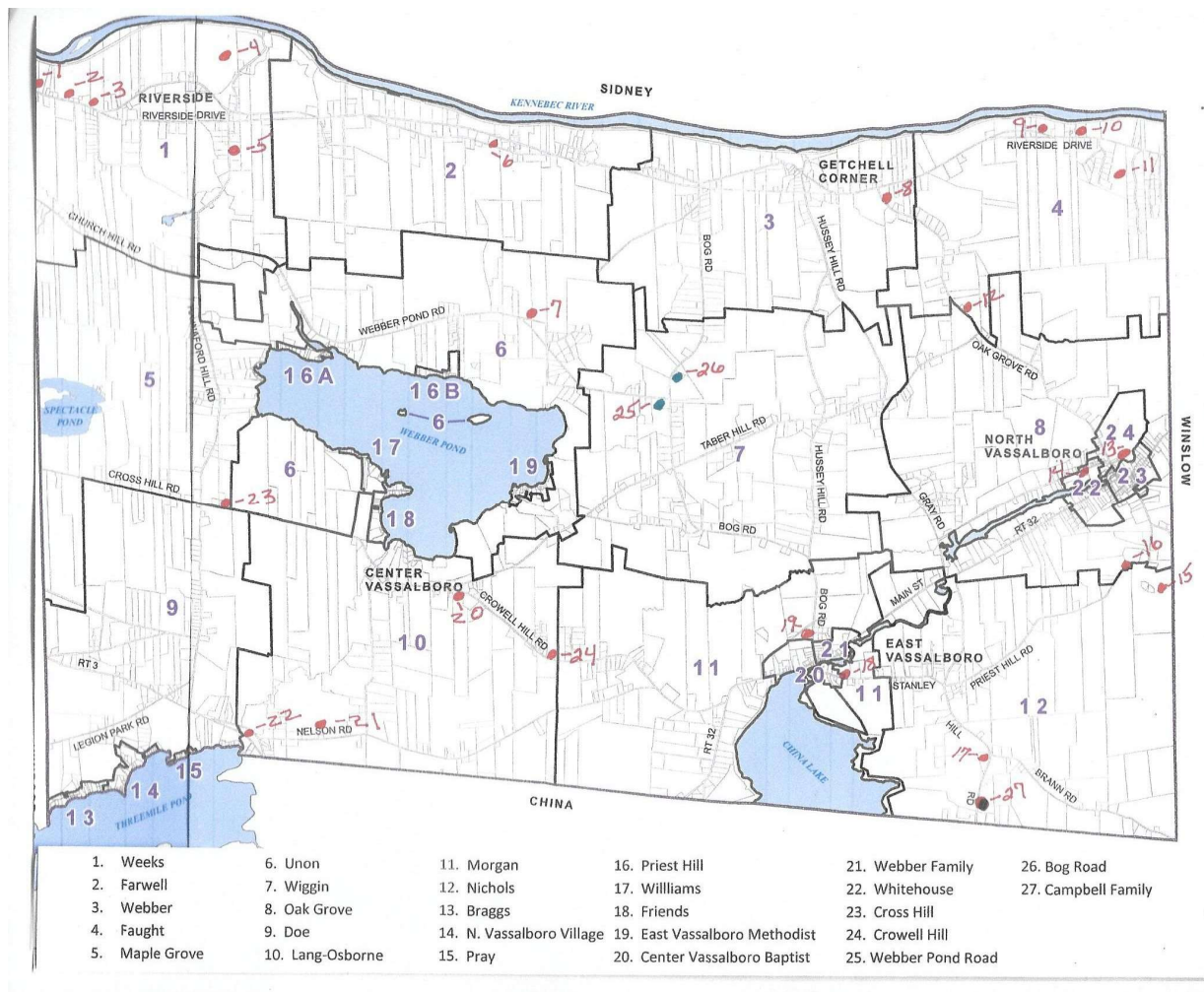
- a. No lot or grave shall be defined by a fence, rail, curb, hedge, trees, or shrubs for the purpose of describing its corners or boundaries. The Town reserves the right to remove the same if so erected, planted or placed.
- b. No individual beds of shrubbery or flowers shall be permitted on the grounds of the cemetery. Planting of trees and invasive plants in the cemeteries is prohibited. Live plants, contiguous to and in front of monuments are permitted. The Town is not responsible for maintaining such plants and the Town reserves the right to remove any plants that obstruct monuments or interfere with mowing.
- c. No glass item shall be placed on lots. Family members are asked to remove temporary graveside decorations and displays. The Town reserves the right to remove and dispose of any remaining gravesite decorations including trees and shrubs that are deemed hazardous, unsightly, detrimental or diseased or when they do not conform to the standards maintained by the rest of the cemeteries. There are no trash receptacles and no dumping at cemetery perimeters. There is a carry in - carry out requirement.

Section 5 - Monuments, Tombs, and Other Structure

- a. The owner of any lot shall have the right to erect one upright monument, not wider than (36") thirty-six inches or 75% of the width of the single or contiguous family owned lots. It must not be taller than eight feet. It must be located at the head of the lot/lots. One ground level footstone is permitted in lots with full casket burials. Other temporary markers as provided by Funeral Homes are permitted until a permanent marker can be installed.
- b. Only one above ground monument is permitted per lot. Up to four ground level markers on lots with multiple cremains are permitted.
- c. Unmarked graves are strongly discouraged.

Section 6 - Correction of Errors

- a. The Town has no liability for errors made by lot owners in location of monument or marker foundation position or if a change is requested will be the responsibility of the parties involved.
- 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.



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