

RULES AND REGULATIONS OAK GROVE CEMETERY

HISTORY

The ground now known as Oak Grove Cemetery was purchased on June 6, 1854, by George A. Coe, who organized a company known as Oak Grove Cemetery Association, for the purpose of platting a cemetery and selling lots there for burial purposes. On July 11, 1855, the Village (now city) of Coldwater purchased the property rights and title of the company and it has since remained the property of the City. When more ground was needed, ninety-five acres was purchased known as the First Addition was platted in 1873 and is located north of U.S. Highway 12. The balance, Second Addition, is located south of U.S. 12.

The care and management of the cemetery was under the Board of Cemetery Trustees from 1897 until 1957. In February 1957 the responsibilities of the Board were expanded to include the care of management of the street trees and parks and its name was changed to the Board of Cemeteries and Parks. This Board remained in control until July 1, 1961. At that time, because of the new City charter, the management of the cemetery was placed under the Director of Cemeteries and Parks and subject to the control of the City Manager. This type of organization was in effect until July, 1985, when a Municipal Services Department was formed by the City Council. This Department includes the Cemeteries, Parks, Forestry and Street Division under a Department head known as Superintendent and is subject to the control of the City Manager.

INTRODUCTION

It is the objective of the city to sustain Oak Grove Cemetery as a beautiful quiet place, sacredly devoted to the interment and repose of the dead. These rules and regulations are adopted in order to achieve this objective.

For the benefit and protection of burial lot owner collectively, it is necessary for the cemetery to enact certain general rules and to exercise reasonable control over individual lots. Not all people are blessed with a sense for the fitness of things and the rights of others. The following rules permanently safeguard the lot owner from detracting features in the cemetery. Without such rules and regulations there would be mistakes and abuses. Anything that would mar the general beauty and harmony of the cemetery must be avoided.

TERMS

- City:** The term “city” as used herein shall be construed as meaning the City of Coldwater.
- Cemetery:** The term “cemetery” shall mean Oak Grove Cemetery and any other cemetery owner by the City.
- Lot Owner:** The term lot or grave owner is intended and shall be construed to mean the owner or burial rights, the owner of burial privilege or the collateral right of use of any burial lot purchased from the city for a consideration evidenced by a “Burial Right Certificate” or by the proved and recognized descent or device from the original owner where same is placed on record with the Cemetery.
- Lot:** The term lot shall include complete or partial burial lots and single graves in the cemetery.
- Supt:** The term superintendent shall mean the Superintendent of Municipal Services or assistant, or any other person in charge of the Cemetery as authorized by the City Manager.

SALE OF BURIAL RIGHTS

Burial lots are available in both the North Cemetery and South Cemetery and can be purchased for cash or on a “Burial Rights Contract”. Purchases of lots acquire only the right and privilege to make interments in the lot and of construction of memorials, subjects to the rules and regulations now in force or which may hereafter be enacted by the City. Purchasers will receive a “Burial Right Certificate” after payment of the lot price. However, no more than one lot or single grave shall be sold to one person, except by permission of the superintendent, and no person is allowed to speculate in said lots.

All burial lots will be sold with provision for perpetual care.

TRANSFER OF BURIAL LOTS

Burial lots may be transferred only upon written permission of the Superintendent or other City agent endorsed upon the original certificate. All applications for transfer rights must be accompanied by a statement showing good and sufficient reasons for such transfer and in no instance will such transfer be permitted where the purpose is speculative or where such transfer would seem undesirable.

All burial right transfers must be recorded with the Cemetery office and the City Clerk, for the City will not recognize as lot or grave owners, person whose names are not recorded.

In transaction involving the transfer of lots or portions of lots which have not been provided with perpetual care, such provisions for perpetual care of the lot must be made before the transfer of burial rights will be approved.

PERPETUAL CARE

The purchase price of every lot and single grave includes Perpetual Care and such care is made a part and condition of each sale. This Perpetual Care includes the mowing of the lots and graves at reasonable intervals, the seasonal cleaning of leaves and other debris from the lots, and also the regading and reseeded of sunken graves. It therefore provides all the essential requirements of a well kept lot without further expense to the lot owner.

INTERMENTS

Burials will be made upon the presentation of a written order, signed by the lot owner or heir, and the burial permit signed by the City Clerk as required by law. No burials will be made on Sundays and Legal Holidays, except when ordered by the Health Department. Interments are for human remains only.

Notice of at least eight working hours in advance of the funeral must be given in order to prepare for the burial. All funerals and interments within the Cemetery grounds are under the direction of the Superintendent or his assistant. The City will not assume responsibility for errors in opening graves when orders are given by telephone. Orders received from Funeral Directors for the opening of graves will be construed as orders from the lot owners. As soon as flowers or emblems used at interment services become unsightly, they will be removed, and no responsibility for their return to owners well be assumed. Cemetery employees will make all interments. Grave openings five feet and more in length will be classed as adult size. Strangers shall not approach the grave at which a funeral is being conducted.

The use of wooden boxes for interment purpose will not be allowed.

Cremations will be buried in some type of non-disposal container.

REMOVALS OR DISINTERMENTS

The City holds that burial space once used, becomes sacred ground and the City shall refuse to open the grave or disinter a body except with the written permit from the County Health Department, which has the signatures of the husband, wife, father, son or daughter and is only for good cause. The city reserves the right to refuse such a request unless there is a permit from the County Health Department.

MONUMENTS AND MARKERS

All monuments and markers are to be constructed of recognized durable granite or standard bronze and certain durable grades and finishes or marble. The City will assume no responsibility for damages in case of the stone being unintentionally chipped or marked in the regular course of lot care.

No monument or marker shall be installed without the approval of the Superintendent or his assistant, who shall designate the location of such monument or marker. Lot owners should not close the purchase of any monument or marker until they have advised the Superintendent of the size, style and material and ascertained that the rules permit its erection. The City will not be responsible for the loss to the owner, caused by rejection of any monument or marker when regular application for setting has been neglected or overlooked before the order was placed. Great care should be taken in selecting the designs for monument and markers. The design should be chosen with reference to its surroundings, consideration being given to the number, size and character of other memorials in proximity to its location. **Monuments are to be set along the monumental line only on burial lots which have monument privileges, one monument on each of such lots. Markers are to be set along the marker line and there shall be only one marker on each grave.** All markers are not to be more than sixteen inches or less than four inches high and shall not exceed twelve inches in thickness. **Double markers shall not exceed forty-two inches in length. The size of markers for baby graves on section 12 and s5 shall be 16" x 8" x 6" and such markers shall be made of gray granite.** Markers shall consist of one piece of part only with bottom being straight across. All markers placed on the same lot are to be alike in color, sand style, unless the Superintendent gives permission to do otherwise.

No pictures are permitted on markers.

Special rules for Section 16, 17, 18 and 19 are as follows: All markers are to set flush with the ground and are to be single markers. Adult markers are to be twenty-four inches by twelve inches and baby markers eighteen inches by ten inches. Monuments are to be positioned as indicated on the plat of the sections and to cover no more than four percent (4%) of the lot area. Monuments placed on the ten foot wide "Garden Companion" lots are to have a two by three foot face area. In order to guarantee good work and for the protection of the lot owners and the general welfare of the Cemetery, all monument and marker foundations are to be constructed by Cemetery employees, and charged to the person or firm ordering the foundation. No monument or marker can be removed from any lot, without the consent of the Superintendent. No mausoleums will be permitted.

Special rules for Section 7 & 9 are as follows: No digging of ground, because of the plastic water lines. One urn per lot, to be placed by monument or marker. NO BUSHES, except on corner lots. Five (5) foot monument on 4 graves (14" wide), Four (4) foot Monument on 2 grave lots (12" or 14" wide) or 42" marker on 2 grave lots. 12 x 24 marker on single graves. Any questions about these rules may be directed to Management.

THE NATIONAL FLAG

All flags placed on grave sites must be in good condition and mounted properly on removable poles or receptacles. The City will not assume responsibility for placement, loss or damage.

Flags will be allowed in accordance with Public Law 829 (The United States Flag Code).

Flags, 3'x5', must be of removal type with permanent flush-type flag pole receptacles. The flag pole receptacle will be installed and furnished by the cemetery upon the lot owners request. The lot owner or owners will be billed for the cost of the receptacle and the installation. Poles shall not exceed 9 feet and be not less than 8 feet.

Procurement, raising, lowering and storage of the flag and pole is the lot owners responsibility. These flags may only be flown from sunrise to sunset. Flags and poles must be removed each day.

The placement of the small veteran flag, size 11" x 16 ½", is the responsibility of the veteran organizations. These flags may fly for five days. The two days prior to Memorial Day, Memorial Day and the two days following Memorial Day.

All existing permanent type flag poles and flags will be allowed to remain on grave sites and be permitted to fly on a continual basis from Memorial Day until Mid-September unless it becomes apparent to the Superintendent or his assistant that specific flag poles are not in use. A seven year period of non-use of any specific permanent type flag pole may result in removal of that specific pole. Notification to lot owners of neglect on said poles will be attempted at the end of a seven year period.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The City reserves the right to perform all work for the care and upkeep of all lots and graves.

All lot owners must provide for the care of their lots through one of the Perpetual Care, Special Care or Annual Lot care programs.

No person shall leave any refuse in the Cemetery, except as they deposit it in the places provided for same.

No fire arms can be allowed on the grounds, except in the case of military funerals.

Fast driving is not allowed. Fifteen miles per hours is the speed limit.

Flowers, wreaths or emblems will be removed as soon as they become unsightly. This includes flower pots left on the graves of the flush sections (section 16, 17, 18, 19). Management will decline to attempt finding them after being so removed. Cutting or otherwise disturbing sod prohibited.

Picking the flowers, wild or cultivated, breaking or injuring any tree, plant or shrub, or in anyway, injuring any monument, headstone, vault, or ornament, or other structure or property within the Cemetery is prohibited, and will, under the State law, subject the offender to a severe penalty.

Urns are the liability of the lot owners and are governed by the rules and regulations of the Cemetery. Vases or urns not properly painted or otherwise cared for and such as are not filled with the plants by June 25th of any year, will be removed from the sections. These vases or urns will be kept for a two year period and if not called for, can be disposed of by the cemetery.

Flower urns are to be set on a concrete base and placed either on the monument line of burial lot or on the center of the grave four feet from the back of the marker line. Such concrete bases are to be installed flush with the ground and are to be large enough to extend at least two inches beyond the outside edge of the bottom of the urn.

Vases or Urns placed on the flush sections, (section 16, 17, 18 and 19) are to be no higher than 12 inches and of one piece. There can only be one vase or urn on a lot in the flush sections.

Cut flowers will be allowed at any time when suitably placed. The City suggests the setting of the patented flower vase which sets into the ground when not in use and leaves the surface of the lot clear. Such a vase can be set adjacent to the marker and will be set for your convenience by the City.

The Superintendent will regard it as a favor if any error, carelessness, or incivility of employees is promptly reported at the office.

One official metallic tablet of the Grand Army of the Republic, or other similar organizations whose membership is limited to those who served in the military or naval forces of the United States of America will be permitted upon a grave.

Wooden tablets, metal wreaths, baskets, tripods, boxes, or easels or trellises or miscellaneous objects shall not be placed upon graves or lots. The Management will not be responsible for loss or damage to any portable articles left upon any lot, grave or other part of the Cemetery.

No coping or fencing or other means of marking boundaries of lots or grave can be used.

No raised mounds will be allowed.

No rose or thorn plants, shrub or trees will be allowed.

Flower beds cannot be made without first obtaining consent of the Superintendent or his assistant. Only 6" – 8" in front of a marker or monuments will be allowed. No flowers are to be planted around a flush marker on the flush sections (sections 16, 17, 18 and 19).

The planting of trees and shrubs within the limits of a burial lot must be done only with the approval and under the direction of the Superintendent.

If any tree, vine, shrub or plant situation within a lot becomes unsightly, dangerous or detrimental, the Superintendent shall have the right to remove the same or such parts thereof as may be deemed necessary.

Imitation flowers, wreaths, grave decorations, “treated” blossoms and everlasting flowers, are man-made, and can never provide the same symbolism or the same beauty as God’s flowers. As they become dirty and unsightly, they create an impression of neglect, rather than remembrance. Such so called “Everlasting flowers” not only becomes very unsightly but create a serious problem in the care and maintenance program of the cemeteries in general. For these reasons, it is not possible to permit any of these imitation grave decorations on any burial lot.

Artificial wreaths, winter wreaths and winter blankets are permitted from November 15th to April 1st.