

City of Coldwater

Oak Grove Cemetery

Location: 809 W Chicago St

Deliveries to: 45 Industrial Drive

Rules and Regulations

City Council approved: 5-29-12

City Council revised: 5-9-16

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 of Coldwater. When more ground was needed, ninety-five acres was purchased known as the First Addition and was platted in 1873 and is located north of US-12. The balance, or Second Addition, is located south of US-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 and 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 of 1985, when a Department of Municipal Services was formed by the City Council. This department includes the cemeteries, parks, forestry and street divisions under a department head known as Director 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 were adopted in order to achieve this objective.

For the benefit and protection of the Burial Rights' Holders 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 Burial Rights' Holders 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 owned by the City.

Burial Rights' Holder: The term Burial Rights' Holder is intended and shall be construed to mean the owner of 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 proven and recognized descent or devise 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.

Director: The term Director shall mean the Department of Municipal Services Director or his 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 the South Cemetery. They must be paid in full at the time of purchase. Purchase of Burial Rights only gives the right and privilege to make interments in the lot. The Burial Rights' Holder is purchasing the privilege to make interments in that lot and is not the owner of the ground. Construction of memorials is subject 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 City, and no person is allowed to speculate in said lots.

Transfer of Burial Lots

Burial lots may be transferred only upon written permission of the City or agent of the City 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 persons whose names are not recorded.

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 regrading and reseeding of sunken graves. It, therefore, provides all the essential requirements of a well-kept lot without further expense to the Burial Rights' Holder.

Interments

Burials will be made upon the presentation of a written order, signed by the Burial Rights' Holder 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 Director 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 Burial Rights' Holder. As soon as flowers or emblems used at interment services become unsightly, they will be removed, and no responsibility for their return to Burial Rights' Holders will 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. A vault must be used with each interment. The vault must be made of a durable material approved by the City or Cemetery staff.

Cremations must be buried in an approved 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 written approval of the City, who shall designate the location of such monument or marker. Burial Rights' Holders should not close the purchase of any monument or marker until they have advised the City 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 Burial Rights' Holder 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 design for monuments 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 that 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. No marker or monument shall be placed other than in the designated row, except a flush marker 12" x 24" may be placed off the marker or monument line for burial of cremains. Up to four cremains with a single marker may be placed on a single grave. All markers are not to be more than 16" or less than 4" high and shall not exceed 12" in thickness. Double markers shall not exceed 42" in length. The size of markers for baby graves in Sections 12 and 25 shall be 16" x 8" x 6", and such markers shall be made of gray granite. Markers shall consist of one piece or part only, with the bottom being straight across. All markers placed on the same lot are to be alike in color and style, unless the City gives permission to do otherwise.

Special rules for Sections 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 24" x 12" and baby markers 18" x 10". 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 Burial Rights' Holder 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 City.

Special rules for Sections 7 and 9 are as follows: There is no planting of flowers permitted in these sections. Flowers are to be in urns only. One urn per lot is allowed and is to be placed by the monument or marker. No bushes are allowed except on corner lots. Monument and marker allowable sizes: A five-foot-wide monument on four grave lots (14" wide), a four-foot-wide monument on two grave lots (12-14" wide), a 42" marker on two grave lots, a 12" x 24" marker on a single grave.

Veteran's Markers

In an effort to honor and ensure no veteran's burial space goes unmarked, cemetery crew will at no charge to the family install the foundation for a Veteran's Administration VA-provided plaque. If there is to be a regular marker/monument on a single grave, or in the case of a double marker/monument for a two-grave lot, such VA-markers should be incorporated into the regular marker/monument whenever possible, as only one marker is allowed per burial space or one monument per lot.

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' x 5', 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 Burial Rights' Holder's request. The Burial Rights' Holder will be billed for the cost of the receptacle and the installation. Poles shall not exceed nine feet and be not less than eight feet.

Procurement, raising, lowering and storage of the flag and pole are the Burial Rights' Holder's responsibility. These flags may only be flown from sunrise to sunset.

The placement of the small veteran flag, size 11" x 16½", 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 City or Cemetery staff 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 Burial Rights' Holder of neglect on said poles will be attempted at the end of a seven-year period.

General Provisions

No artificial decorations shall be placed on any grave or lot without first having written approval from the City.

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

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

Cemetery speed limit is fifteen miles per hour.

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 (Sections 16, 17, 18 and 19). Management is not responsible for items that have been removed. Cutting or otherwise disturbing sod is prohibited.

No additional mausoleums are allowed.

Picking the flowers, wild or cultivated, breaking or injuring any tree, plant or shrub, or in any way injuring any monument, headstone, vault, or ornament, or other structure or property within the Cemetery is prohibited and will be prosecuted under State law.

Urns are the liability of the Burial Rights' Holders 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 25 of any year, will be removed from the section. 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 or 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 (Sections 16, 17, 18 and 19) are to be no higher than 12" 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 that 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 the Burial Rights' Holder's convenience by the City.

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, shepherd's hooks, bird houses/feeders, toys, statues, easels or trellises should not be placed upon graves, lots or in the trees of the Cemetery. This includes any items that are not deemed respectful by the City. Exception to these rules may be granted for Section 25 by written permission from the City. Forms are available at the City Offices. The City 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 graves can be used.

No raised mounds will be allowed.

No rose or thorned plants, shrubs or trees will be allowed.

Flowerbeds cannot be made without first obtaining written consent of the City. Only six to eight inches in front of a marker or monument will be allowed. Once flowers are planted the cemetery is not responsible for the upkeep of this area. 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 City.

If any tree, vine, shrub or plant situation within a lot becomes unsightly, dangerous or detrimental, the City 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 flowers. As they become dirty and unsightly, they create an impression of neglect rather than remembrance. Such so called "everlasting flowers" not only become 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.

A previous exception does not constitute permission for all.

Anything placed within the Cemetery boundaries must be approved by the City and is subject for removal by the City.

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