

## Regulations for Shutesbury Cemeteries

### **Section One: General Regulations: Conduct of Persons within Cemeteries**

Cemetery access is permitted between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset.

Please be respectful of the resting places of family, friends and neighbors.

Alcoholic beverages, camping, and fires are prohibited.

You are welcome to walk your dogs here, but be sure to clean up after them.

Do not pick flowers, either wild or cultivated; do not break or cut trees, shrubbery or plants.

Do not deface or otherwise damage gravestones, monuments, markers, gravesites, or other structures.

Gravestone rubbings are prohibited unless permitted in writing by the Lot owner or by the Cemetery Commission if no Lot owner can be found.

Neither the Shutesbury Cemetery Commission nor the Town of Shutesbury is to be held liable for theft, vandalism and/or destruction of property on any Town Cemetery.

### **Section Two: Purchase of Cemetery Lots**

Note: The Cemetery Commission asks those who have questions and concerns about burials, gravestones, etc., to come to our regular monthly public meetings so we can answer their questions in as a timely a way as we can, and ask our own questions to get clarity about their needs and desires. Consult the Town Meetings Calendar for information about the next scheduled meeting and link. Please contact the Chair to be put on the agenda.

#### **Part A: Purchase**

For further information regarding purchasing lots, burials, and their requirements, (including the Natural Burial Section), please visit the Cemetery Commission section of the Town website [www.shutesbury.org](http://www.shutesbury.org)

The purchase of cemetery lots is limited to those individuals with personal connections to Shutesbury. New sales to Non-Residents are available only to people who have previously resided in town, or have family members resident in town, or are descended from people who were residents, or at the discretion of the Cemetery Commission.

Persons who wish to purchase lots must contact the Chair of the Cemetery Commission or another member of the Commission if the Chair is not available.

### **Part B: Transfer and Repurchase of Lots**

The Town of Shutesbury reserves the sole and exclusive authority over the use and/or exchange of lots. Any change in ownership or transfer of rights may be made only through the Shutesbury Cemetery Commission.

The Shutesbury Cemetery Commission may, at its discretion, allow the transfer of ownership of cemetery lots from one person to another.

The Shutesbury Cemetery Commission may, at its discretion, agree to repurchase a lot or lots from the lot owner, their heirs, or the lot owner's estate. The amount paid for the repurchase of a lot will be the original amount paid for the lot, but not less than \$100.00/lot.

### **Section Three: Burials**

Burial arrangements are normally made with a funeral director who communicates with the Chair of the Cemetery Commission. However, it is possible for funerals to be directed by family members or the executor(s) of the deceased, as long as all regulations are followed. Consult the website for the Cemetery Commission's Guidelines for a Family-Directed Funeral.

Whoever is directing a funeral is required to inform the Chair of the Cemetery Commission of burial date, time, cemetery in which burial is to take place, a lot#, and name of owner of lot prior to any commitment to the deceased's family.

The burial of cremated remains must be arranged with the Chair of the Cemetery Commission.

Burials are not required to be in a vault in any part of any of Shutesbury's Cemeteries, but vaults are not prohibited in any section except the natural (green) burial area of West Cemetery.

### **Section Four: Grave Decorations and Graves:**

The owner of a plot shall have the right to erect a gravestone, marker or monument commemorative of the dead. However, no private individual shall install a gravestone or marker until a member of the Cemetery Commission has marked the proper location for the stone. Anyone not following this regulation will be charged a fine of \$100.

(Definitions: A gravestone is upright; a monument is a more elaborate structure like an obelisk or a statue; a marker is set in the ground. The top of a marker must be even with the soil line and its dimensions not more than 2 feet by 1 foot.)

All gravestones and monuments for traditional burials must rest on a foundation of cement and stone, and shall reach a depth below the customary frost line and be built to professional standards. A natural stone used as a gravestone need not rest on a foundation as long as the stone is not subject to falling over.

Statues, fences, curbing, effigies, or other structures that may interfere with maintenance are prohibited. Small items left in remembrance are not prohibited as long as they are placed on the stone so that they don't interfere with maintenance.

Placing of flags must be approved by the Chair or in his absence another member of the Shutesbury Cemetery Commission.

Planting of any trees, shrubs or ornamentals without permission from the Cemetery Commission is prohibited. Annual or perennial flowers may be planted in front of the gravestone or monument. The Commission has the authority to trim or remove any plantings as deemed necessary.

Cemetery staff have the right to remove all flowers, containers & decorations on any burial site when they deem necessary.

Approved by the Shutesbury Cemetery Commission 12/15/21; revision approved 9/20/23