

CONGREGATION SHIR HE-HARIM BRATTLEBORO AREA JEWISH COMMUNITY INC. CEMETERY RULES, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Revision: January 2019

Overview

In keeping with the long-standing tradition of inclusiveness within the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community, these sections: Overview, Guidelines, Financial Regulations, Rules and Conclusion are designed to be complete and respectful as well as a thoughtful attempt to meet the needs of a diverse and eclectic Jewish community.

Our community has one cemetery, called the Congregation Shir He-Harim Cemetery. It maintains land sub-divisions, referred to as sections. In some sections, only Jews, as determined by our Rabbi or Spiritual Leader, are buried. In other sections, Jews and non-Jews may be buried, as well as those who have made the non-traditional choice of cremation. Additionally, a Family Plot area will be maintained in the section of the cemetery where both Jews and non-Jews can be buried.

The Cemetery Committee will designate certain plots within each section that are available for purchase. When a section is 70% -90% purchased, the committee will open an adjoining section.

Guidelines

In accordance with Jewish tradition, the following suggestions are offered:

1. A plain pine coffin or similar casket should be used with no metal hinges, fasteners or handles. An in-ground vault is not permitted. The option of direct burial with a covering shroud is permitted to the same depth as described elsewhere in this document for coffin burials.
2. The body should be clothed in a simple, white and clean shroud. Men and women should be buried with a tallit over the shroud.
3. A shomer (watcher) should be part of our practice. That is, the deceased should not be left alone from the moment of death until burial. The family should be encouraged to designate a member of the family as the shomer, but the congregation will provide assistance if requested.
4. Cut flowers are not appropriate for a Jewish service.
5. The process for preparing the deceased for burial is called Tahara, or purification. It is conducted by the Jewish burial society, a group of community volunteers, one group for women and another for men, called Chevra Kadisha, or holy brotherhood. A Tahara should be requested when funeral arrangements are made.
6. The funeral should be held within 24 hours of death, if possible.

Financial Regulations

- 1. Members may purchase a burial gravesite (plot) and receive the corresponding deed. Please note that plots of choice will not be guaranteed and no deed will be issued until payment arrangements are made.**
- 2. For members of the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community, the current fee is \$500 per plot, paid in full, which includes the cost of perpetual care. The Board may alter this purchase price at any time. The cost of the plot does not include funeral home expenses, which include all the burial arrangements including preparing of the plot for burial, transportation of the deceased, cremation, various state and town paperwork fees and other expenses associated with the mortuary. Plot purchase also does not include costs of a foot-stone (required) or a head-stone (optional), with arrangement to be made with a monument company, who will make, inscribe and place the stones to the requirements defined within this document.**
- 3. The member, at the time of purchase, may choose the location of the plot within the area of the cemetery designated by the Cemetery Committee as available for sale. Please note that there are two sections (Jewish and Interfaith) in addition to Family Plot alternatives, as outlined elsewhere.**
- 4. Members may purchase a plot for their own use and also for others in their immediate family. The immediate family is defined as the member (s), spouse, civil union partner and their dependent children and stepchildren under the age of 25.**
- 5. Members may also purchase single burial plots for extended family members. The cost for each of these plots is \$1000, including perpetual care. Extended family includes parents, adult children and stepchildren over the age of 25, spouses or civil union partners of the children, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren. Extended family does not include cousins, aunts, uncles, or their spouses or civil union partners, or any other family relationship or close friend.**
- 6. Family Plots maybe purchased in the designated section of the cemetery where both Jews and non-Jews may be buried. The plots must be adjacent to one another and we do not require a specific person be designated per plot as outlined in these regulations for other graves. Once payment is received, a deed will be issued as part of that particular family, with a name added when the plot is going to be occupied. All other cemetery rules apply, including plantings, decorations, headstones and footstones.**
- 7. Non-members may purchase family plots at the non-member rate. Members may purchase family plots for unidentified individuals at the extended family rate, and for their own use at the member rates.**

8. Non-members may purchase a single burial lot. The current fee is \$2000 and includes the cost of perpetual care.

9. All plots are non-transferable except as noted in #10 below.

10. After the purchase of a plot, if the owner has a change of heart or moves from the environs of Brattleboro, they may sell it back to the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community for the original purchase price, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

11. All prices are subject to change by the Board of Directors, as recommended by the Cemetery Committee.

Rules

1. Deed will not be issued until the Committee has received payment in full, a completed information form and the signed acknowledgement.

2. Embalming and cosmetology are forbidden, except when required by state law.

3. Any religious service held at the cemetery must be a Jewish service. If a non-Jewish person wants to have an official role at the service, it can be worked out with the officiating Rabbi or Shaliach Tzibbur (Spiritual Leader) and/or the President of the Congregation.

4. No non-Jewish symbols or deity may be introduced.

5. There will be no public viewing of the body.

6. One casket per plot is permitted, although we allow the following provisions:
a. Burial of two cremations may take place in the same plot.
b. A cremation and casket are allowed in the same plot.

7. The purchasers or their heirs are required to obtain a footstone and may add a headstone. These must be placed within one year from the date of burial and should face toward the center of the cemetery.

8. Footstones must be uniformly placed at the foot of the grave, with the measurements of 12" x 24" as to fit at the foot of a 3.5' x 10' plot.

9. Upright headstone monuments are permitted at the head of the grave with the following dimensions. Single size dimensions should be 20" wide, 28" high, 6-8" deep with a base 24", 12-14 deep and 6-8" high. Family stone dimensions: 36" wide, 28" high, 6-8" deep with a base 44", 12-14" deep and 6-8" high. These are the only two types of monuments that are permitted. Recommended stone is white granite.

10. No plantings and artifacts are permitted and will be removed.

11. Any questions concerning Jewish ritual will be decided by the Rabbi or Spiritual Leader in conjunction with the Chevra Kadisha. The Cemetery Committee has the responsibility for all other policy decisions, subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

12. The Cemetery Committee, with approval from the BAJC Board of Directors, has created a Policy for Burial of Indigents in the BAJC Cemetery. This policy is available from any cemetery committee member.

Conclusion

If there is anything the Cemetery Committee, Rabbi, Spiritual Leader or Board of Directors can do to assist you, please do not hesitate to ask. We have available The Last Life Cycle Event, if that would be of help, as well as a listing of all Funeral Homes in the area. We are happy to arrange a Shiva, regardless if you know many people, or if you are new to our community.

Again, on behalf of the Cemetery Committee and the Board of Directors, our community is committed to providing whatever support you require, either now or in the event of the passing of a loved one.

