

PARCR Quarterly Meeting Brings Members Together at Garden Spot Village July 8, 2026

PARCR held its Quarterly Meeting on July 8, 2026, at Garden Spot Village in New Holland, with members participating both in person and by Zoom. The meeting brought together resident leaders from across Pennsylvania, even as several communities were dealing with storm-related damage and power outages.

The program opened with an invocation by Chaplain Chet Yoder, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call. Bob Newell welcomed everyone, and Susan Martin conducted the roll call of participating communities.

Steve Lindsey, CEO of Garden Spot Village, gave a warm welcome and introduced several of the community's distinctive programs. He spoke about the aeroponic greenhouse, the Thistle Down affordable housing model, and the Wisdom Project, which encourages residents to reflect on their life stories and share their wisdom with younger generations. He also highlighted Garden Spot's larger mission of purpose, service, and community connection.

Joanne Grossi, AARP Pennsylvania State President Emeritus, delivered the keynote presentation, "AARP and Its Work with Seniors." She introduced AARP as a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded in 1958 to empower people to choose how they live as they age, and noted that it has nearly 40 million members and 53 state and territorial offices. She explained that AARP's work includes both member benefits and a broader advocacy mission, and emphasized that being nonpartisan does not mean being nonfactual.

A substantial part of Joanne's presentation focused on the many services AARP offers members and older adults. She described discounts and benefits in travel, finance, health, wellness, entertainment, and shopping, along with AARP Magazine and the AARP Bulletin. She also reviewed AARP Foundation programs that address senior poverty, housing, hunger, and isolation; Wish of a Lifetime; Tax-Aide for eligible low- and moderate-income taxpayers; and OATS, which helps older adults strengthen their technology skills.

Joanne also described AARP's community-based programming. These efforts include driver safety classes, tele-town halls on topics such as Social Security, Medicare, elections, and health policy, as well as free exercise classes, guided walks, movie programs, and educational lectures. She noted that AARP uses these programs not only to inform members, but also to keep them engaged, active, and connected.

Fraud prevention was another major theme in Joanne's remarks. She discussed the AARP Fraud Watch Network, the Fraud Watch Helpline, the Perfect Scam podcast, free shredding events, and the Bank Safe program, which trains bank professionals to spot suspicious financial activity. She warned about common scams such as fake utility shutoff calls, grandchild scams, and romance scams, and encouraged members to share warnings with friends and neighbors.

Joanne closed her presentation by outlining AARP's major advocacy priorities: lowering prescription drug prices, supporting family caregivers, protecting Medicare, and protecting Social Security. She described AARP's role in helping win Medicare drug-price negotiation authority, and she stressed the importance of preserving strong health and retirement protections for older adults. She also explained that family caregivers need more support through tax credits and paid leave, given the significant financial and emotional burden many caregivers carry.

Austin Cawley of LeadingAge PA followed with a legislative update. He reported that the Pennsylvania state budget remained unresolved and reviewed key issues affecting aging services, including Medicaid funding, nursing facility staffing, affordable housing, workforce shortages, and updates to the Older Adult Protective Services Act. He also discussed Medicaid pending delays and the need for practical reforms that better reflect current operating realities.

PARCR President Bob Newell then presented his report on the organization's progress and priorities. He welcomed new board member Myron Slabaugh. He said PARCR will begin offering two additional Zoom presentations each year so members can hear from expert / professional speakers who are not able to travel to quarterly meeting.

Mr. Newell reviewed several upcoming speakers, including Jill Vitale-Aussem, Terrence Carolan, A.V. Powell, Scott E. Townsley, Jeff Trendel, and Susan Saxinger. He also emphasized that PARCR continues to work on ways to make recordings and materials more useful to members locally. Individual PARCR membership remains open to all CCRC residents, and NaCCRA will now handle community sign-up directly, which should make membership access easier.

A significant portion of the meeting focused on the CCRC Statute Rewrite Task Force. Mr. Newell explained that the task force continues its careful review of Pennsylvania's 1984 statute, comparing it with North Carolina's updated law and looking for practical modernization. The work is centered on four themes: disclosure, solvency, resident rights, and enforcement. He also noted that task force minutes are posted on the PARCR website so members can follow the work more closely.

The meeting concluded with final announcements, including ongoing member outreach, encouragement to use the LeadingAge PA Voter Voice tool, and plans for a short survey to gather feedback from attendees. Members then adjourned to lunch, with an optional tour of Garden Spot Village's aeroponic greenhouse afterward.

Next PARCR Quarterly Meeting: October 14, 2026, hosted by Londonderry Village, featuring Susan Saxinger, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Assisted Living Association, speaking on her role with the Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council.
