



**Nanosatellites Advisory Committee**  
**Tuesday, November 18, 2014 1:30 p.m.**  
**House Room D, General Assembly Building**

Delegate Ken Plum, chairman of the Nanosatellites Advisory Committee, called the meeting to order.

Mary Sandy, Director of the Virginia Space Grant Consortium (VSGC), provided the committee with an overview of the Consortium and the extensive work that it does in the Commonwealth. VSCG is one of 52 consortia around the county. The Space Grant program was established by Congress in 1987 (the Virginia program began in 1989), and promotes partnerships between higher education, industry, government, museums and science centers, and other partners. Amongst its many goals, the Space Grant program seeks to establish networks of universities with capabilities in aerospace-related fields, and promote science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education from elementary through university levels. The VSGC is the top-ranked program out of the 52 programs. Ms. Sandy's presentation provided a thorough overview of VSGC's numerous projects, initiatives, scholarships, and other activities. A full copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available on the JCOTS website.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Delegate Tom Rust commended the VSGC's Virginia Aerospace Science and Technology Scholars (VASTS) Program. He noted that students he has talked to had a tremendous experience. He also commented on the continuing need to help reach middle school students, and get them "hooked" on STEM-related interests early in their academic careers.

After providing the overview, Ms. Sandy presented a concept paper for a Commonwealth Small Satellite Initiative. A copy of the concept paper is available on the JCOTS website. She proposed that VSGC would serve as a lead administrative agent for such an initiative, which would include university, industry, and aerospace organization partners. Outside funding could be used to leverage state funds, and the initiative could be used to facilitate opportunities at the Mid Atlantic Regional Spaceport, continued collaboration with NASA, and STEM pipeline activities, among other things.

Dr. Christopher P. Goyne, Associate Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and Director of the Aerospace Research Lab at the University of Virginia, also presented

a concept proposal. A copy of his proposal is available on the JCOTS website. His proposal was complementary to Ms. Sandy's proposal, with a key focus of his proposal on funding students to design, build, and fly spacecraft.

After the presentations, a brief discussion took place concerning the October rocket explosion at Wallops Island. It was generally agreed that the event was tragic, but should not set back JCOTS' interests in proceeding with a nanosatellite initiative.

Delegate Plum said that he was very enthusiastic about the potential of the JCOTS group in developing a nanosatellite initiative. He said that he would recommend to JCOTS that the group be continued during the 2015 interim to explore the ideas presented.