

**JONESFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**  
**SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS**

At this September 24, 2020 public meeting to review DTE Energy's ("Applicant") August 26, 2020 Zoning Ordinance interpretation requests ("Request") related to their proposed Meridian Wind Park wind energy project ("Project"), it is necessary to make certain disclosures of potential conflicts of interest by members of the Zoning Board of Appeals ("ZBA") pursuant to the ZBA's Bylaws and applicable law. Applicant is requesting interpretations under the Zoning Ordinance related to turbine height regulations, the meaning of the terms "Wind Turbines Generators" and "WTG Towers," and the application of the term property lines.

All members of the ZBA have conflicts of interest with Applicant's Request and Project. The ZBA hereby formally discloses the following conflicts of interest on behalf of each ZBA member:

- **Ruth Coppens, Chair:** Chair Coppens is exploring entering into an agreement with Applicant to put wind energy improvements on her property within the Township. Her husband has agreements with Applicant to place wind energy improvements on properties in Jonesfield Township, Porter Township, and Mt. Haley Township as part of the Project. Chair Coppens's immediate neighbors also have signed agreements with Applicant related to the Project.
- **Larry Tibbits, Member (Township Supervisor):** Member Tibbits' neighbor has signed a lease agreement with Applicant to place a turbine on his property. Further, Member Tibbits' neighbor across the road (to the east) has also signed an agreement with Applicant related to this Project.
- **Richard Bluemer, Member (Planning Commission Chair):** Member Bluemer's mother in-law signed an agreement with Applicant to place a wind turbine on her property in Mt. Haley Township as part of the greater Meridian Wind Park Project. A property owner immediately adjacent to a property that Member Bluemer and his sister own (via a trust) has signed an agreement to place a wind turbine on that property. Moreover, a property owner immediately across the street from the trust property has signed an agreement with Applicant to site wind energy improvements.

All members of the ZBA have per se conflicts of interest under their Bylaws related to the Request and the Project. The ZBA's Bylaws designate that its members do not have impermissible conflicts of interests and are not prohibited from considering, deliberating, or voting on a request when the Rule of Necessity applies. The Rule of Necessity applies when:

1. Conflicts of interest under the ZBA's Bylaws or the Standards of Conduct for Public Officers and Employees Act, Act 196 of 1973, MCL 15.341 *et seq.*, prevent a quorum of the ZBA from voting, deliberating, or considering a matter; and
2. All ZBA members with conflicts of interest disclose all personal, financial, or business interests related to a project or request and disclose anything they reasonably believe may constitute conflicts of interest; and

3. A member utilizing the Rule of Necessity is not paid for more than 25 hours of work per week for the State of Michigan or a political subdivision of the State of Michigan.

Based on the above disclosures, the ZBA Bylaws, and applicable law, each member of the ZBA present tonight intends to participate in the review of Applicant's Request and intends to make a decision related to Applicant's Request.

Respectfully submitted on September 24, 2020.