

Grand Prix organizers seeking candidates for CEO position

By Julie Scharper, *The Baltimore Sun*, November 9, 2011

Leaders of the financially-strapped company that produced the Baltimore Grand Prix have been interviewing candidates to take the helm of the group, officials said Wednesday.

"Believe it or not, there are several people who have expressed interest," said Peter Collier, Baltimore Racing Development's Chief Operating Officer.

Felix Dawson, a former executive with Constellation and Goldman Sachs, is among the candidates under consideration, Collier said. "It shows the caliber of the people that we're interviewing and the level of interest that we're getting," Collier said.

Dawson did not return a request for comment. Walker Mygatt, one of the racing group's managers, is one of Constellation's top executives.

Jay Davidson, the group's CEO, stepped down in the face of mounting financial woes, but remains an employee of the company.

Baltimore Deputy Mayor Kaliope Parthemos ordered the racing group this week to restructure or sell itself and to make good on the \$1.5 million it owes the city in unpaid taxes and fees.

Parthemos also commanded the group to pay \$480,000 to the Maryland Stadium Authority, and warned that the city would sever its contract if Baltimore Racing Development failed to pay by a Dec. 31 deadline.

Several contractors have stepped forward in recent weeks claiming that the racing group failed to pay them hundreds of thousands of dollars for bleachers and concrete. Six parties have sued the racing group — including Davidson's father-in-law — demanding payments.

Collier said race organizers were focused on "sustainability."

"We're being wise in our approach and we're going to do it right," he said.

Councilman William H. Cole IV, a strong backer of the race, praised the group's efforts to import new leadership, but warned that they faced a daunting task.

"I'm pleased to hear that they're actively reorganizing themselves, but they still have far to go," he said. "At the end of the day, they need to pay their debts and their taxes and fees."