

Ex-goalie has \$80,000 in commitments for buying Spirits

By LEN HOYES
Journal sports writer

Attorneys and accountants are working against a Friday deadline in an effort to resolve ownership of the Flint Spirits.

"We're making progress in a grass roots approach," said Bob Perani, former goaltending star in the International Hockey League. He is spearheading a drive to aid the financially-struggling team.

Perani said he has firm commitments for \$80,000 in his group's bid to secure \$150,000 in new financing for possible purchase of the assets from President-Owner Laraine Lamb. He said \$150,000

would guarantee a team through the 1986-87 season.

"We have a meeting on Wednesday among attorneys and accountants and we have another meeting on Thursday," Perani said. "We'll know more after the figures are determined."

He indicated there's a possible obstacle in reaching an agreement before Friday which has become an unofficial deadline. "We must figure a way to get through any transition period," he said, "because there isn't time to set up a corporation. We may have to obtain an option to buy and run the team for a week or so until

legal work is completed."

Lamb several weeks ago said she hoped to resolve the problems by the end of January, a position which became clearer on Tuesday.

IHL Commissioner Bud Poile said Friday is the deadline imposed by the IHL Board of Governors for all 10 teams to satisfy league obligations.

"All dues, assessments and fines are to be paid up by Friday," he said. "The Governors made that decision on Jan. 14 at our meeting in Kalamazoo. Teams must be current or we'll go into their performance bonds."

Poile said each team is required to post bonds or letters of credit for league obligations.

He said Flint is behind on payments. "It's not only Flint but also other teams," he said, but declined to list other teams which haven't met obligations.

One report listed the Spirits' liability to the league in the \$10,000-\$13,000 range.

Perani also said his group must meet with City Administrator Robert S. Collier before any move is finalized. The city operates IMA Sports Arena which has been home to Flint teams since October, 1969.

Collier indicated that Perani's group

faces competition from other investors. He said, "I don't know if it's solid or not but I'm meeting with a group from out of town on Thursday."

Perani said he's getting numerous calls with offers of financial assistance.

He said, "Our approach to small investors is doing a lot of good. So much good can come out of this because we're getting many people involved. We want to involve the community. If we get 100 people selling their idea to friends, we'll get others involved."

"We still have a lot of work to do but I think it will pay off."

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