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Huntwood founder leads effort

Family buys equity interest in dormant mining concern, which seeks new properties

By Linn Parish

A family partnership led by Huntwood Industries President Tim Hunt has bought a majority interest in Metaline Mining & Leasing Co., of Liberty Lake, and Hunt now is leading the long-dormant company with the hope of helping it become an active mining company once again.

Hunt was named chairman and president of Metaline Mining late last month and says the company has started to assemble a management team to handle day-to-day operations. Also, it has contracted with two consultants to help it identify mining properties it could acquire.

"We believe in the strength of precious metals moving forward," Hunt says. "I believe it's a good time to make an investment in this sector."

Metaline Mining, whose stock is traded on the OTC Bulletin Board, plans to hold a shareholders' meeting within the next 30 days to discuss the company's recent changes and a potential name change, Hunt says.

Meanwhile, the company is looking at several mining properties in both North and South America, and likely will make and announce acquisitions within two months, he says.

Late last month, Hunt Family LP bought 7.7 million shares of Metaline common stock for about \$500,000, or 6.5 cents a share. The purchase gives the partnership a 51.5 percent ownership in the company. As part of the transaction, the partnership was granted warrants to buy 15.4 million additional shares at the same per-share price within the next five years.

Warrants are certificates tied to a stock-purchase agreement and can be traded like stock. They are similar to stock options, which are contracts that allow an investor to buy a specified amount of stock at a fixed price.

Though Hunt is serving as Metaline's chairman and president, his primary focus will continue to be as president of Huntwood Industries, the big Spokane Valley cabinetmaking company that he and his wife, Resa, started in 1988. Huntwood is among the largest manufacturers in the Inland Northwest and currently employs more than 800 people. Through Hunt Family Properties LLC, the Hunts are developing a 510,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Liberty Lake that Huntwood will occupy later this year.

In addition to the Hunt partnership's stock purchase, a \$150,000 private placement was completed late last month through which Metaline Mining sold 1.5 million warrants. Each warrant shall be automatically converted into one share of the company's common stock when the company is able to do so.



Steve Taylor, Metaline's director of investor relations and the company's only employee, says those transactions, coupled with the company's existing assets, bring its total cash position to about \$1.1 million.

Metaline, which currently occupies a small office at 1611 N. Molter in Liberty Lake, will be adding staff members in addition to management in coming weeks, but Taylor says it's unclear how many people it will employ.

Metaline started in 1927. Early on, it held some mineral rights and did some exploration near Metaline, Wash., about 100 miles north of Spokane. Taylor says, however, that all company activity ceased in the 1950s.

"Nothing has happened with the company for a very long time," he says.

Hunt says he became interested in Metaline because his family was involved in mining when he was young, and he remained interested in the natural-resources industry in general.

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