Twinkies Buyer Says Cakes Could Return By Summer

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NEW YORK (AP) — Hostess is moving ahead with plans to sell its Twinkies, and one of the new owners says the spongy cream-filled snacks could be back on shelves by summer.

The bankrupt company had earlier picked a $410 million joint offer from Metropoulos & Co. and Apollo Global Management as the "stalking horse" bid to set the floor for an auction.

In a document filed in U.S. bankruptcy court on Monday, however, Hostess Brands said the auction would not be held because no other qualified bids were submitted for the cakes, which include Ding Dongs and Ho Hos.

In a statement, Metropoulos & Co. CEO and founder Dean Metropoulos said the firm was looking forward to having "America's favorite snacks back on the shelf by this summer."

A spokesman for Hostess said the company had no comment on the lack of competing bids for the snack cakes. Previously, Hostess CEO Greg Rayburn had predicted the process would be "wild and wooly."

A representative for Apollo, whose investments include the fast-food chains Carl's Jr. and Hardee's, declined to comment.

Hostess had also canceled an auction for its Wonder and other major bread brands after no competing offers were made. Those breads are being sold to Flowers Foods, which is based in Thomasville, Ga., and makes Tastykakes and Nature's Own bread. The final sales of the breads and Hostess snack cakes are set to be approved in bankruptcy court on March 19.

McKee Foods, which makes Little Debbie snack cakes, was picked as the lead bidder for Drake's cakes, which include Devil Dogs, Funny Bones and Yodels. The deadline to submit competing offers for those snack cakes is Tuesday, with an auction set for Friday.

Hostess, based in Irving, Texas, stopped making its cakes and breads in late November after it announced it was going out of business and closing its plants following years of financial struggles.

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