

Tesla's top accountant exits after a month on the job

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Tesla shares faced fresh pressure after news of the departure of the electric automaker's chief accounting officer and a bizarre interview with CEO Elon Musk

Tesla's top accountant announced Friday he was stepping down after a

month on the job, citing the electric car company's frenetic pace.

News of chief accounting officer Dave Morton's departure added to the sense of uncertainty surrounding the [company](#), sending Tesla shares lower in pre-market trading and following a bizarre interview late Thursday in which chief executive Elon Musk was seen smoking marijuana.

Morton's departure roiled the company which has been under heightened scrutiny since Musk's chaotic announcement on August 7 on Twitter that he was considering taking Tesla private, a plan that was reversed two weeks later.

The ill-fated effort has prompted a US securities investigation and a class-action lawsuit alleging Musk was trying to punish investors who bet against the company.

"Since I joined Tesla on August 6th, the level of public attention placed on the company, as well as the pace within the company, have exceeded my expectations," Morton said in a securities filing.

"As a result, this caused me to reconsider my future. I want to be clear that I believe strongly in Tesla, its mission, and its future prospects, and I have no disagreements with Tesla's leadership or its financial reporting."

In an interview with comedian Joe Rogan, Musk drank whiskey and tried a marijuana-and-tobacco cigarette proffered by the comedian as he mused about artificial intelligence and colonizing space.

The appearance was the latest unorthodox move by Musk, who has often surprised investors with brash and unpredictable behavior as Tesla has sought to live up to lofty manufacturing targets for its Model 3 electric car.

Shares of Tesla slumped 8.3 percent in pre-market trading to \$257.80.

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