



Share offices instead of building new

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As the City of Warren continues to study taking out bonds for capital improvements, there are many issues its leaders should resolve and a lot more public discussion that they should hear.

Warren is considering borrowing money to construct a one-stop administration building, repair roads, purchase emergency vehicles and other spending. Former Mayor Michael O'Brien and current Mayor Doug Franklin have said that the time is right because the city is about to pay off existing loans, thus, money will be available to make payments on new loans, and interest rates are at all-time lows.

Chief among the issues that should be resolved is why, instead of borrowing more money, Warren can't pay as it goes using the money from the loans that get paid off. In doing so, long term, Warren taxpayers would save by not incurring interest and banking fees.

More specifically, Warren has not demonstrated that it has made nearly enough effort to use its proposed one-stop building to consolidate services to save taxpayers in the future. Franklin, some City Council members and other leaders toured a new one-stop building in Green, near Akron, but have not adhered to the concepts behind Green's administrative building.

For example, Green has merged administrative functions with other local governments, chiefly Green schools, to share the building and staff. The city and school district share the building, thus, one secretary instead of one each answers the phone; one receptionist instead of one each greets visitors; one chamber instead of one each houses City Council and Board of Education meetings; one . . . well, you get the picture.

The Warren Board of Education already blundered by purchasing an administration building without a plan to share it. The City of Warren, especially since Trumbull County has many offices in deplorable buildings, should not make the same error.

Nor should Trumbull County or any local government. No new construction or capital purchases should take place without a shared services plan or an explanation for why sharing services is inappropriate.