

Minutes of the **Work Session** of the **Planning Commission Meeting** held Thursday, **September 4, 2025**, in the **Lehi City Hall** located at **153 North 100 East**.

Members Present: Gregory Jackson, Commission Chair
Brent Everett, Commission Vice Chair
Tyson Eyre, Commissioner
Nicole Kunze, Commissioner
Ken Roberts, Commission Alternate

Members Absent: Beau Jones, Commission Alternate
Emily Lockhart, Commissioner

Others Present: Kim Struthers, Community Development Director; Brittney Harris, Planner; Katie Bussell, Planner; Jacob Curtis, Planner; Caden Petersen, Planner; Gary Ellis, City Engineer; Abby Havea, Assistant Recreation Director; Kate Morgan, Deputy City Recorder.

Regular Work Session, 5:30 p.m.

1) Call to Order

Commission Chair Jackson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) Conflict Resolution Training

Dr. Danya Rumore introduced herself. She is a professor at the University of Utah with a Ph.D. in city planning.

She shared her outline of the trainings she would be doing. She planned on discussing what conflict is, what conflict competence is, and then introducing and practicing three basic skills to navigate conflict, namely understanding interests vs. positions, effective listening, and effective framing and reframing.

She began the training with an exercise where pairs of attendees thumb-wrestled each other. This took place over two separate ‘rounds’ the first of which was conducted in silence, and the second of which allowed competitors to talk and strategize beforehand. After hearing about experiences during the exercise, she shared that she had some unique responses from the group, and that she almost always has a variety of different responses regardless of what group she does the exercise with. She discussed how the exercise is meant to show how conflict stems from interdependence on each other and differences in concerns and needs within that interdependence. People often have false assumptions that conflict is a zero-sum game, but it rarely is. Communicating and implementing an effective joint strategy is the way to create mutual gains. Rumore explained that

talking is different than communication. For communication to happen, parties must have confidence in each other to follow through and also be able to look out for their own interests.

Rumore defined conflict as the intersection of different needs, wants, ideas, and concerns that are in tension with each other and not easily reconciled. She discussed the root of the word ‘collaboration’ being ‘co-labor,’ meaning to work together to make conflict productive and rooted in interest-based negotiation. Conflict competence is the ability to deal with conflict skillfully. It isn’t just being nice, compromising, disagreeing better, or sitting down shutting up and getting along. Rumore discussed positionality, and how it can make conflict worse as the fundamental issues aren’t being addressed. Conflict competence comes from the ability to focus on the interests of the parties (also known as the ‘why,’ or the fundamental needs) rather than on positions (also known as the ‘what’ or ‘how,’ and strategies). Interests can be procedural, substantive, and emotional/relational. She explained that at the end of the day, most people just want to be heard and considered.

Rumore conducted an exercise where individuals thought about a conflict in their life in order to identify the interests at play in that conflict. She discussed the importance of finding the core drivers of conflict. She mentioned the ‘nine whys’ method, which encourages people to continue asking why until they can arrive at the root of something. She explained that values and identity can cause instinctual responses that perpetuate conflict, rather than ones that are helpful in its resolution.

Rumore shared some advice for identifying and focusing on interests in conflict. It is important to be patient and practice, as it is a radical paradigm shift for many people. Understanding interests is like peeling back layers of an onion, and it is a philosophy that is applicable to all aspects of life. Effective listening is a vital skill to have.

Effective listening means truly listening to understand what others are trying to communicate. It is a core skill for working through conflict, collaborating, and coexisting well with others. Curiosity is a big help in developing this skill—and open mindset and a willingness to understand are prerequisites for effective listening. It is not something that happens naturally, it is a choice and it takes work. Some tips for effective listening are: focus on truly trying to understand, practice curiosity, be attentive, be inviting and avoid judging, clarify what you’re hearing, confirm or summarize what you have heard and revise as needed, and pause to create space.

Commissioner Eyre asked how to avoid sounding robotic and practiced when confirming or summarizing what has been said. Rumore recommends inviting questioning and emphasizing genuine interest in the situation.

An effective question is one that helps you truly understand what the other person is trying to communicate. Open-ended, non-leading questions are the best way to accomplish this. Rumore discussed how being heard and understood is a fundamental human need. People typically become better listeners once they have expressed their feelings and concerns. Often people don’t listen because they don’t feel they have been heard. She recommends seeking first to understand before being understood.

Rumore finished her presentation by explaining that effective listening takes practice. It's important to set yourself and others up for success by managing dysregulation and taking responsibility for making a good space for listening. She emphasized that when people feel like their identities are on the line, communication falls apart.

Rumore gave the Commission a listening self-assessment worksheet, as well as instructions to review the slides and handouts before the next meeting on October 2nd.

Commissioner Kunze asked about responding to nonverbal communications. Rumore recommends being kind and firm and not being the person who lobs aggression first. She also recommends taking a break from the message and coming back to formulate a response.

3) Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Planning Commission at this time, Commissioner Everett moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Eyre seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:57 p.m.

Approved: October 9, 2025

Attest:

Commissioner Greg Jackson,
Commission Chair

Kate Morgan, Deputy City Recorder