



**NEVADA COMMISSION for the RECONSTRUCTION of the V&T RAILWAY
("V&T Railway Commission")
Agenda Report**

Date Submitted: 06/21/21

Meeting Date Requested: 06/24/21

Time Requested: 25 Minutes

To: NEVADA COMMISSION for the RECONSTRUCTION of the V&T RAILWAY Commissioners

From: David Peterson (dpeterson@visitcarsoncity.com)

Subject Title: Discussion and possible action regarding the authorization for the V&T Commission Chair to approve an Event Agreement and associated agreements for Polar Express (PEX), with Rail Events.

Staff Summary: This item will authorize the V&T Railway Commission Chair to approve an Event Agreement and associated agreements for PEX, with Rail Events.

Type of Action Requested:

Resolution

Ordinance

Formal Action/Motion

Other (Specify) Presentation Only

Recommended Board Action:

I move to authorize the V&T Railway Commission Chair to approve an Event Agreement and associated agreements for PEX, with Rail Events .

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation: n/a

Fiscal Impact:

Explanation of Impact:

Funding Source:

Supporting Material/Attachments:

#19578-PE Exhibit A 2018 Event Guidelines
Rail Events 2021 Polar Express Presentation

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THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride

Exhibit A Event Guidelines



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Section 2 Overview

“Well? You comin’?” “This is the Polar Express!”

Rail Events Incorporated has partnered with Warner Bros. Consumer Products to offer railroads and railroad museums the opportunity to host an engaging and immersive event based on the beloved Warner Bros. film THE POLAR EXPRESS™. This time-honored holiday train ride event brings many elements from the film to life as passengers are immersed in a fun, magical, and ethereal journey onboard the train. Starting the moment passengers arrive, they are welcomed with themed music, attractive décor, and THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded signage and collateral. On board the train, passengers will be entertained by characters from the film, served Hot Chocolate and a cookie from dancing Chefs and Waiters, as well as have their very own Golden Ticket punched by the Conductor. After a presentation of *The Polar Express* story, the train will arrive at the North Pole where Santa will climb aboard and personally deliver the first gift of Christmas, a Silver Bell from his sleigh, to each child on the train. THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride offers a revered and memorable experience for children and adults alike that will undoubtedly become a holiday tradition for families.

The following guidelines will give a thorough overview of the many aspects of the event as well as the minimum requirements for presentation. In the event there is a conflict between the Event Guidelines and the terms of the Exhibition Agreement, or any supplements, the terms of the Exhibition Agreement shall control. Each host has agreed to work in good faith with Rail Events Inc. regarding the Event Guidelines and any supplements or modifications thereto.

“Come on, come on. I’ve got a schedule to keep”

Section 3 General Requirements

Overview: THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride experience begins the moment passengers arrive on site. Arriving early for their scheduled train departure time, the immersion into the world of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ begins. Each ticket entitles the bearer to a train ride that is no less than one (1) hour in length, a Golden Ticket, live entertainment from onboard performers, a delicious cup of Hot Chocolate, a tasty cookie, a presentation of *The Polar Express* written by Chris Van Allsburg, and a visit with Santa. In addition, each passenger will receive the first gift of Christmas, the official of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded Silver Bell.

Depot or Terminal Area: THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must have a depot or terminal area large enough to accommodate the same number of people as the capacity of each train, plus additional room for ticketing, retail, restrooms, and any other supplemental activities. There should be adequate covered space for all passengers to protect them from weather and sufficient facilities to accommodate the number of visitors coming through the event each night. In addition, there must be space to accommodate the presentation of a prologue directly inspired from the film at or near the boarding area. For further information regarding the depot and boarding area see (SECTION 5: Depot and Boarding Area). For further information about the presentation of a prologue see (SECTION 12: Prologue).

Railroad Route: The railroad route used by THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must be long enough to provide a minimum of a one (1) hour round trip and ideally should not exceed one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes in length. The physical characteristics of the route should allow that the travel time requirement be met with only minimal stops or changes in direction. If necessary because of particular physical restraints stops or changes in directions may be incorporated into THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride when needed, but should be done in such a way that they are integrated into the event. Route considerations must include:

- Railroad must be suitable for passenger travel within the requirements of any local, state, federal, or other governing agencies with jurisdiction over the territory.
- An adequate location to create the North Pole in accordance with the guidelines. For further information regarding the North Pole see (SECTION 7: North Pole).

Locomotives and Rolling Stock: The railroad equipment used for the event are essential in creating the overall environment and experience that passengers will have. While being true to the film's aesthetic is ideal, the most important qualities of the coaches is their safety, cleanliness, and overall condition of good repair. For further information regarding the passenger coaches see (SECTION 6: Train). The host railroad must consider the following in determining their railroad equipment needs for THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride:

- Total consist capacity must accommodate a minimum of three hundred (300) passengers per departure. This figure may be flexible based upon a potential host's specific circumstances and restrictions with approval from Rail Events Inc.
- Rolling stock must be safe and suitable for passenger travel and meet the requirements of any local, state, federal, or other governing agencies with jurisdiction over the equipment.

- Prior to the start of the event, coaches must be clean and presentable.
- Steam locomotives are not required but are encouraged for hosts where the option exists.

Safety of Operations: Safety of all passengers and personnel involved in the event is of paramount importance. Each host railroad must have an appropriate Safety Training Plan and ensure that all staff members and volunteers involved in the event participate in documented training to keep themselves and passengers safe in potential unusual circumstances. It is important that situational awareness and personal protection from the results of normal and unusual slack action in trains should be understood by all personnel. Locations of first aid kits and automatic external defibrillators should be well known by all personnel and emergency procedures should be reviewed at initial training and on a daily basis. Necessary routine safety announcements made on board for passengers' safety may be made in a character voice themed for the event.

Management and Key Staff: It is important that the host railroad determine the key staff members that will be required to successfully produce the event well in advance of the event's opening. In addition to the staff and operating crew, each event must have at least one (1) manager or equivalent position designated as responsible for general management, event management, onboard production management, retail, reservations, and operations. Each person in a management position should be available for ongoing consultations with Rail Events Inc. staff leading up to the event opening as well as throughout the duration of the run. In addition to the management positions there must be appropriate staffing to cover performers, food service, retail, ticketing, train operations, and general event needs each night, so that the event never runs shorthanded. Dependent on the size and scope of any particular event, additional management positions might be essential to ensure smooth daily operations. For further information regarding staffing see (SECTION 10: Event Staffing). For further information regarding performers see (SECTION 11: Cast).

Catering: Each event is required to serve Hot Chocolate as part of the onboard experience. In addition to serving Hot Chocolate, taking inspiration from the original book, serving a delicious cookie is also required. For further information regarding catering see (SECTION 9: Catering).

Required Amenities and Premiums: Each event is required to give passengers specific amenities and premiums as determined by Rail Events Inc. Hosts will be required to utilize Event Accessories and premiums as sourced through Rail Events Inc. Event Accessories consist of event support items including, but not limited to, Hot Chocolate cups and lids, First Class branded napkins, branded conductor hat emblems (badges) and lapel pins, and other items related to the event experience and brand support. Any exceptions to the use of the Event Accessories will be upon prior approval by Rail Events Inc.

The following items must be incorporated within the event and must be sourced from Rail Events Inc. or otherwise approved by Rail Events Inc.:

- THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Golden Tickets must be handed out to all passengers. Golden Tickets must be punched by Conductor who may be assisted by others. Golden Tickets may be punched or stamped with letters or words inspired by the film.
- THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Silver Bell must be given to each and every passenger on board the train. Paying passengers may not be refused a bell if requested.
- THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride First Class Mugs must be given to all paying passengers with a First Class ticket.
- THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Branded Cups must be used for Hot Chocolate service.

For further information regarding the required event amenities see (SECTION 14: Retail Products, Premiums, and Event Accessories).

Guest Services: Exemplary customer service is a key element of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. As such, guest services are an integral part of the customer service experience. In addition to fulfilling the basic needs of passengers, added attention to guest services provides an opportunity for a host venue to accommodate unique and more complex customer service requests. The following guest services must be considered when planning the event.

Vehicle Parking: A well-executed parking operation will set the tone for the event. Easy to read branded signage and helpful parking attendants are crucial to ensure customer satisfaction at the start of the event. Parking attendants should be knowledgeable about the event and be able to answer most questions passengers may have. There should be an appropriate number of spaces reserved for parking for those persons with disabilities at a location nearest the event entrance. As a recommendation, the event should have enough parking for two (2) concurrent departures to be staged during the same time period at a rate of four (4) passengers per vehicle. If the host railroad already charges a fee for parking, or the event logistics specifically require it, then parking fees will be allowed. While not ideal, but if necessary, the use of offsite parking and shuttle buses shall be the responsibility of the host railroad. If a host railroad is utilizing offsite parking and a shuttle system, there must be a passenger drop off location near the entrance of the event.

Restrooms: There must be an adequate number of well-marked restrooms with branded directional signage, including ADA accessible restrooms. Regular servicing including, but not limited to, cleaning, restocking, and dumping must be scheduled. It is recommended that climate controlled restroom facilities be utilized over portable toilets to help ensure customer satisfaction.

First Aid: Basic first aid kits must be available at the boarding area and onboard the train at all times. At least one (1) staff member on site and onboard the train should have basic first aid and CPR training in the case of an emergency. All staff members and volunteers at the event should be aware of who that person is and how to contact them. There must also be access to a telephone to call 911 in case of an emergency. The local fire and police departments should be contacted with the dates of the event. Further to these recommendations, it is officially the responsibility of the host to ensure safety measures are in place for their passengers, and Rail Events Inc. is unable to provide any daily oversight and does not accept responsibility for the host's failure to comply with these recommendations.

Stroller Parking: There must be a designated area for passengers to park strollers as there is not typically room onboard the train to accommodate them. This area should be secure and clearly marked with proper branded signage. In general, keeping strollers off of the train improves the efficiency of the boarding and alighting process.

Trash and Recycling: Trash receptacles must be located conveniently throughout the event site as well as onboard the train. A trash collection schedule should be strictly adhered to throughout the day. Dumpsters should be located in a convenient spot for servicing on a daily basis (before or after the event times), yet distant enough for aesthetic reasons.

Event Plan: Comprehensive planning is essential in the development of a well-executed event. In addition to providing guidance for staff and volunteers during the run of the event, a well-documented event plan can serve as a roadmap for the event during transitional periods of leadership. Each host is required to submit a THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Event Plan to Rail Events Inc. for approval no less than one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the start of the event. A template for this form will be provided by Rail Events Inc.

Note: Variations due to differing logistical challenges posed by individual hosts are certainly understood by Rail Events Inc. These may include, but are not limited to, a change in the train operating scenario, availability of permanent structures in place of tenting, onsite food vendors, production equipment availability, etc. Any changes to an individual presentation of the event from these guidelines must be submitted and approved by Rail Events Inc. as a part of an approved THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Event Plan, a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the start of the event. A completed and approved event plan is essential in the development of a well-executed event and is a requirement of Rail Events Inc.

General Requirements Fundamentals

- ➔ Safety of all passengers and personnel involved in the event is of paramount importance
- ➔ The railroad route used must accommodate a minimum of a one (1) hour round trip and ideally should not exceed one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes in length
- ➔ An adequate location is required to create the North Pole in accordance with the guidelines
- ➔ Rolling stock must be safe and suitable for passenger travel and meet the requirements of any local, state, federal, or other governing agencies with jurisdiction over the equipment
- ➔ There must be space to accommodate a presentation of a prologue directly inspired from the film at or near the boarding area
- ➔ A well-executed parking operation will set the tone for the event
- ➔ Basic first aid kits must be available at the boarding area and onboard the train at all times. At least one (1) staff member on site and onboard the train should have basic first aid and CPR training in the case of an emergency. All staff members and volunteers at the event should be aware of who that person is and how to contact them
- ➔ Any changes to an individual presentation of the event from these guidelines must be submitted and approved by Rail Events Inc. as a part of an approved event plan, a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the start of the event

Section 4 Design, Immersion, and Engagement

Overview: THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride is a family tradition where passengers can personally experience and relive memories of their favorite Christmas story. They feel the Christmas spirit, the magic, and believe with feelings of childhood innocence. By creating a space warm with Christmas cheer, festive with décor, enveloped with music and sounds, and surrounded by characters from the film, we transport passengers away from their true existence and into an environment of curiosity as seen through the eyes of the children on THE POLAR EXPRESS™. In a world somewhere between reality and a dreamlike state, tangibility can be questioned and we learn that

“Sometimes seeing is believing”.

Through a seemingly impossible train, a Conductor who seems to know all, the mystery of an apparitional Hobo, and the wise and empowering words of Santa, we become a character and step into the film where

“Sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can’t see”.

The artistic development of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride event for each host is what truly sets this event apart from others. Once the physical and logistical requirements are accomplished then hosts can turn to this most important and fulfilling aspect of the event. Beginning the creative process without thinking about limitations and letting ideas and brainstorming flow is an ideal way to set the groundwork for exciting events. Starting with all the potential ideas that could be incorporated into each individual aspect of the event without getting concerned with the realities or methods of accomplishment will, in the end, yield numerous creative elements and solutions. Each event is different, and each brings new possibility to the overall brand. Thinking big then later paring down ideas into actual solutions is what keeps the event fresh and exciting for passengers and staff alike.

Artistic Concept Statement: *The Polar Express* was masterfully written and illustrated by Chris Van Allsburg. His style of artwork creates a perfect marriage of believability and surreal dreamlike images. The theme of believing is well supported by Chris's use of both language and visual art. Together these elements set an ideal basis for Robert Zemeckis and the artists at Warner Bros. to recreate and expand upon. The film holds very true to the original story but through its writing, animation, and sound adds many more sensory elements to continue to support the theme of believe. With all of this superb groundwork set in place it is our job to not reinvent THE POLAR EXPRESS™, but to add the third dimension. The storytelling and artwork have been done for us already. We need to take what's been given to us and bring it to life so that our passengers enjoy the same experience that the characters from the film experienced.

At THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride passengers will meet and be entertained by characters from the film. Experiencing the ride through the eyes of the children on board a magical train, passengers will have their Golden Tickets punched by the Conductor, drink Hot Chocolate delivered by dancing Chefs and Waiters, hear the music from the film, be entertained by a cast of characters, and of course meet Santa himself. Receiving the first gift of Christmas from Santa, a Silver Bell from the harness of one of Santa's reindeer, might be only a brief interaction but is most powerful to passengers of all ages, and will instill belief for one more year. Combining these elements and appealing to all of the five senses will create an immersive and inspiring event that is sure to impact the lives of many, and create a feeling that touches the hearts of children and parents alike.

Immersion and engagement is essential to THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride for many reasons. It drives the event, and brings the story of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ to life. It keeps the experience interesting throughout the event, and delights passengers when the event is over. Immersion works on both a conscious and a subconscious level and can help mask difficult realities of event limitations, such as undesirable scenery. Creating and executing an interesting and immersive experience for passengers can be accomplished in a multitude of ways, but perhaps the most important consideration is to engage passengers through all five senses. The sense of sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste, can each capture a passenger in the both obvious and subtle ways, creating a more memorable and fulfilling experience than they could have imagined.

Using the Five Senses: In event production and design, it is important to appeal to all of the five senses to make a lasting impression on each passenger. Triggers for some of the senses are more obvious than others, but all five play an important role in how our perceptions work. The more apparent elements are those which are tangible but often the most powerful elements are intangible. Some of these, usually the tangible, work to influence us on the conscious level and, in many cases, the intangible elements influence impressions on the more powerful subconscious level.

Sight: The most apparent and first sense that should be addressed is sight, both tangibly and intangibly, consciously and subconsciously.

It is important that the depot area be visually appealing and designed with professional looking THE POLAR EXPRESS™ themed décor and plenty of branded directional signage. Friendly, welcoming staff members dressed in brand inspired attire should be present, greeting passengers as they arrive. These elements combine to create a cohesive environment so that passengers know they have arrived at THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. Other elements that can be seen at the depot or terminal area are appropriately selected characters from the film, such as Conductor, Hero Boy, Hobo, Steamer, or Smokey. They offer value to the event and make great photo opportunities for passengers. Santa and his Elves must not be seen at the depot or terminal area prior to their introduction within the presentation to adhere with the storyline and promote continuity.

In addition to these tangible elements, the intangible element of lighting can play a very important role in the visual appeal of the event. Quality and thoughtful lighting to give the area a warm Christmas feel has a strong influence on the subconscious while also accomplishing a more concrete task of providing passengers with safe and well-lit walkways and paths. Dimming the general lighting and accenting lighting surrounding the prologue presentation area prior to the start of the boarding process subconsciously immerses each passenger into the experience. For further information regarding lighting at the depot see (SECTION 5: Depot and Boarding Area). For further information regarding the lighting during the prologue presentation area see (SECTION 12: Prologue).

It is important that the train is aesthetically pleasing and resembles THE POLAR EXPRESS™ train itself to the best of each host's ability. Details such as branding the outside of the train with THE POLAR EXPRESS™ lettering is highly recommended to help create the illusion of the specific train from the film. This is especially important for locations that do not have access to rolling stock that visually resembles the film's train, including the heavyweight coaches and steam locomotive. Themed coach names based on elements from the film such as Glacier Gulch, Caribou Crossing, or Artic Circle should be used in lieu of more generic coach names or numbers. Also important is to have costumed staff greeting passengers and assisting with boarding. This keeps the mood festive and welcoming as passengers board the train. Once on board, passengers should see professionally appointed coach interiors with THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride themed décor. The onboard décor and lighting should create a warm and inviting Christmas atmosphere. White Christmas lights, green garland, and wrapped presents are among the décor that should be seen on each coach. For further information regarding platform and train décor templates see (SECTION 6: Train) and (SECTION 15: Signage).

Sound: Sound is another intangible design element that affects people on both the conscious and subconscious level. THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film soundtrack, other non-branded Christmas carols, or appropriate music should be used to enhance the event and set the right mood. On a more subconscious level, sounds of locomotives, trains, or other intentional appropriate environmental sounds can have a large impact on the passenger's perception and impressions. It is important to consider not only the music and sound effects that passengers are intended to hear, but also the unintended sounds and noises that might be a part of the environment. Sounds such as coach and track noise, locomotive horns and whistles, or any outdoor environmental sounds that can be heard and might mask passengers' ability to hear the purposefully created sound design should be considered. Christmas music from competing brands is not acceptable and is not permitted at any time during the event. For further information regarding sound design see (SECTION 5: Depot and Boarding Area) and (SECTION 6: Train).

Smell: Entirely in the intangible category, the sense of smell should also be addressed. It is among the most influential senses for people. Pleasant odors in the spaces passengers will be occupying, including the depot and train, should be used not only to mask potential foul odors but more importantly to enhance the overall experience. Air fresheners reminiscent of Christmas, such as pine or cinnamon, should be sprayed or atomized into the air to give the space a festive and warm feel. A consideration on the train is the scent of Hot Chocolate and a cookie, as those play an important role in the event. Their lovely scent should be subtle yet effective. It should be noted that a foul odor will tend to leave a greater negative impression on passengers than a pleasant smell can leave a positive one. There should be no foul odors around THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride and thus addressing their potential diligently is of great importance.

Taste: Taste is one of the most important elements on board the train for THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. Here passengers enjoy their Hot Chocolate and a decadent cookie. Should the host choose to expand on the sense of taste, offering food and beverage options while passengers wait to board the train is appropriate. For further information regarding Hot Chocolate and cookie see (SECTION 9: Catering).

Touch: The always tangible but often overlooked sense is touch. Touch can be interpreted and incorporated in several ways. One easy way to address this sense is by giving passengers their Golden Ticket upon arrival. Passengers are able to hold their ticket printed on smooth glossy paper stock, faithfully representative of the film thus adding to the magic. As passengers settle into the plush seats in each coach, they can feel the cool air outdoors as it frosts the windows, and the warmth of Hot Chocolate cups in their hands. The sense of touch can be invoked during the presentation of *The Polar Express* story by encouraging cast members to ask children to turn a page as the story progresses. Other ways to address the sense of touch could be to have a retail area open while passengers wait or to provide children with coloring activities, letters to Santa, or toys to play with while they wait to board their train ride. For further information regarding retail see (SECTION 14: Retail Products, Premiums and Event Accessories).

Design, Immersion and Engagement Fundamentals

- ➔ It is our job to not reinvent THE POLAR EXPRESS™, but to add the third dimension
- ➔ It is important to appeal to all of the five senses to make a lasting impression on each passenger
- ➔ The depot area should be visually appealing and designed with professional looking THE POLAR EXPRESS™ themed décor and plenty of branded directional signage
- ➔ Friendly, welcoming staff members dressed in brand inspired attire should be present, greeting passengers as they arrive
- ➔ Elves and Santa must not be seen at the depot or terminal area to adhere with the storyline and continuity
- ➔ Branding the outside of the train with THE POLAR EXPRESS™ lettering is highly recommended and creates the illusion of the specific train from the film
- ➔ THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film soundtrack, other non-branded Christmas carols, or appropriate music should be used to enhance the event and set the right mood

Section 5 Depot and Boarding Area

Overview: The depot and boarding area is the main gathering point for passengers. Often it is the first place to which passengers are exposed to THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. The location should be a comfortable and inviting space for passengers to arrive and wait for their train. Passenger services such as ticketing, retail, and general waiting spaces must be thoughtfully considered to create a memorable positive impression for all passengers.

Venue: The depot and terminal area should be a covered space large enough to comfortably accommodate more than the capacity of the train to allow space for passengers of multiple train departure times. This may be a permanent structure or a temporary event tent located outside. Weather conditions must be considered at the depot and boarding area.

“Watch your step. Watch your step. Tricky walking up here.
It’s mighty slick. Mighty slick, I’ll tell you.”

Dependent on local climates, hosts should be prepared for whatever weather might present itself during the event. Being ready with snow removal equipment and ice melt to keep the walkways clear for passengers or air conditioned waiting areas for people who might require it are essential customer service considerations. If a tent is being used side walls and heaters should be available for cold climates. Air conditioning equipment might be required for hosts located in warmer climates. The tent should also be designed, constructed, and maintained in such a manner that ensures excess moisture is kept out of the space.

Décor: The depot area should be well branded and have adequate signage directing passengers to various locations throughout the venue. Christmas trees, garland, wreaths, holiday bows, and lanterns are among the many decorations that can be considered. Creating a feeling representative of the warmth of the holiday season, while remaining true to the brand is the ultimate goal that all hosts must strive to accomplish.

“It’s so Christmassy and cozy and beautiful!”

It is important to keep this area specific to THE POLAR EXPRESS™ using either specific branded elements or generic items with a classic holiday feel. THE POLAR EXPRESS™ branded items from the décor templates are encouraged for use. These items may include, but are not limited to, branded banners, THE POLAR EXPRESS™ branded ornaments and branded sign templates. Items from any other competing brands must not be used as a part of the décor at the event.

Pre-Show Activities: While not required, hosts are encouraged to creatively add immersive and interactive pre-show activities for children and adults to engage in. Potential activities include, but are not limited to themed coloring pages, letters to Santa, and interactive props such as a Naughty or Nice machine. In addition, video monitors can display THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film as passengers wait to board their train ride. These activities could be located within the depot, retail area, another adjacent structure, or in an event tent. Staffing requirements may change as additional activities are offered. For further information regarding staff see (SECTION 10: Event Staffing).

Lighting Design: The depot and boarding area lighting should take influence from the film but be adapted for practical considerations at each host's boarding location. Like in the film's many locations, the lighting should be used to create a cozy and festive holiday atmosphere. While the main purpose of general lighting in the depot and boarding area is for safety and practical purposes, color can be employed in general lighting with the color palettes of the film to enhance the appearance of the environment and setting. Christmas lights should be warm and golden white just as they are in the North Pole images. It is important that the lights are dim and soft enough to set the mood, but still bright enough to see both performance and practical elements.

Sound Design: As passengers arrive at the depot or boarding area for the event there must be music playing to assist in creating an immersive environment and help transport passengers to the world of THE POLAR EXPRESS™. While music from THE POLAR EXPRESS™ soundtrack is of the most importance in the event's overall sound design, avoiding the iconic tracks during this pre-boarding time is a good way to enhance the impact of those songs once the train ride begins. Using the classic Christmas carols found on the soundtrack that are interspersed throughout the film is a good way to remain immersive while not overusing the more iconic scored music. Pre-recorded script elements in character voice overs are effective in adding professionalism and interest to the event. Any housekeeping announcements, such as boarding or safety announcements, should be pre-recorded for a better overall presentation as they typically sound better than live microphone announcements. Sound effects and additional environmental sounds can enhance the design and elevate the event above and beyond the minimum requirements. Sound systems used at THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must always be of good quality, able to produce clear, undistorted, full range sound, with even coverage across the entire passenger listening area.

Use of Cast and Characters: Having the appropriate characters at the depot and boarding area enhances the immersion and initial impact of the event. They also provide photo opportunities for passengers. Generic characters that are not specifically branded such as Stewards, dressed in slacks, vest, and bow ties, give the event a feel of professionalism. Other characters that might be present at the depot and boarding area are the Conductor, the Hero Boy, the Hobo, as well as Steamer and Smokey. Any of these characters may be seen prior to the train ride and can recreate scenes from the film. Chefs and Waiters may be present while passengers are boarding the train and they may assist in passenger boarding. However, it should be noted that in the film, neither Chefs nor Waiters appear until the Hot Chocolate service begins. Using other characters prior to that point will help increase the impact of their anticipated arrival. To keep with the theme, story, and continuity, Santa and his Elves must never be seen prior to arrival at the North Pole. Characters that are not a part of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film, such as Mrs. Claus or characters from other branded entities, are not appropriate and must not be used during the event. For further information regarding the cast and characters see (SECTION 11: Cast).

Depot and Boarding Area Fundamentals

- ➔ The depot and terminal area should be a covered space large enough to comfortably accommodate more than the capacity of the train to allow space for passengers of multiple train departure times
- ➔ If a tent is being used side walls and heaters should be available for cold climates. Air conditioning equipment might be required for hosts located in warmer climates. The tent should also be designed, constructed, and maintained in such a manner that ensures excess moisture is kept out of the space
- ➔ Items from any other competing brands must not be used as a part of the décor at the event
- ➔ Sound systems used at THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must always be of good quality, able to produce clear, undistorted, full range sound, with even coverage across the entire passenger listening area
- ➔ The main purpose of general lighting in the depot and boarding area is for safety and practical purposes. Color can be employed in general lighting with the color palettes of the film to enhance the appearance of the environment and setting
- ➔ Characters that are not a part of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film, such as Mrs. Claus or characters from other branded entities, are not appropriate and must not be used during the event
- ➔ Hosts are encouraged to add creative, immersive, and interactive pre-show activities for children and adults to participate in

Section 6 Train

Overview: Though many aspects need to come together harmoniously to successfully produce a THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride event, the culmination of them all is the train ride itself. Design elements from several disciplines should together play a role in making this much more than a train ride but a cohesive presentation of THE POLAR EXPRESS™.

“Hey. Hey you. Yeah, you. Do you know what kind of train this is? Well do ya?”

When individual aspects are thoughtfully brought together creating a story that passengers are led through by characters and elements of the film, the train itself can begin to be thought of as one large complex prop; a moving venue that is unique to this event, and much more than just a train.

“It’s a magic train.”

Route and Duration of Train Trip: While it is understood that each venue hosting the event has its own individual constraints, some of the train trip elements are essential to the success of the event and should be adhered to as closely as possible. Concessions can be made, but there are required elements that cannot be strayed far from. Each round trip should be a minimum of one (1) hour in length and not exceed one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes. When traveling to the North Pole, the train trip should be approximately thirty (30) minutes in length in each direction with no more than a five (5) minute stop at the North Pole. The route should possess physical characteristics that allow the travel time requirement to be met with only minimal stops. If necessary because of particular physical constraints, stops or changes in directions may be integrated into THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride when needed, but should be creatively added into the storyline. At the North Pole the train should pull slowly by the set, giving each passenger a good view. Once by, a stop should be made to pick up Santa then proceed back to the depot. Typical operating speeds may be adjusted to fit the train trip time requirements, but most events operate at less than twenty (20) miles per hour. The physical route and distance is secondary to the ability to provide a minimum one (1) hour round trip train ride, however it should be noted that trips with less stops or changes in direction tend to be the more successful events without significant addition of scripting to explain away the unusual circumstance. Some route considerations include:

- The ability to dispatch trains or have influence controlling train movements on the territory within a defined schedule.
- Having autonomy in positioning physical props and imagery along the route.
- Trackside scenery and the view from coaches along the route.
- The safety, security, and accessibility of the trackside locations of event assets such as the North Pole.

An important item that a host must take into consideration when designing a route is an adequate location trackside to create the North Pole set in accordance with the guidelines. Autonomy in land use and decision making as well as security of trackside locations used for the North Pole are important items to take into account.

If desired, host railroads may work with local residents and business owners to decorate along the route. While the route does not have to be entirely scenic, it is important that unsightly and inappropriate visuals seen by passengers be minimized during the event. In many cases the darkness of night will mask many undesired visual elements however they may be visible if matinee trips are offered. Opaque window treatments such as tinting films or customized window graphics can be employed to divert passengers' attention away from unsightly and distracting elements. The ability of the host to dispatch and control train movements on the territory to be used can be important in keeping trains running on time. While not essential, it can alleviate many delays or concerns with last minute changes in operating plans.

Equipment: The coaches used for the event are integral in creating the overall environment as well as the experience that passengers will have. The essential items to consider with the equipment when designing the consist are related to safety and operational restrictions. While being true to the film's aesthetic is important, the most important qualities of coaches are their safety, cleanliness, and overall condition of good repair. Less practical, but of nearly equal importance are the more aesthetic or idealistic elements of equipment, especially when a host has a choice in which passenger coaches to use. The host railroad must consider the following in determining railroad equipment needs for THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride:

- Enclosed passenger coaches with proper heating, cooling, and ventilation appropriate for weather conditions and local climate.
- Adequate interior and aisle space for performers and entertainers to move freely about the coach during the event.
- Windows must be in good repair and should be clean, clear, and provide adequate viewing of the North Pole.
- Coaches must be equipped with adequate audio equipment that is able to produce clear, undistorted, full range sound, with even coverage across the entire passenger listening area.
- Onboard restrooms are required and must be kept in working order.

Classes of Service: While not required, various classes of service may be offered on THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride to give passengers options in their travel comfort and experience. It should be noted that regardless of class of service, all passengers must share the same event experience while the differences are noticed in the equipment itself and the offered amenities. Names and descriptions of commonly offered classes of service are provided in the following examples.

Standard Class: Every event should include a Standard Class ticket option. This ticket price includes Hot Chocolate, a cookie, a Golden Ticket, a presentation of *The Polar Express* story, and a Silver Bell personally delivered to each passenger, as well as all of the other required elements of the event.

Deluxe Class: An optional elevated class of service that can be used which is situated between Standard Class and First Class. The experience on board the train is exactly the same as in Standard Class but Deluxe Class passengers may be seated in more comfortable seats and receive upgraded souvenirs or amenities.

First Class: This is the highest level of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride service. Traditionally most railroads offering First Class employ parlor style seating with tables and chairs. All First Class ticketed passengers must receive a ceramic THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride mug.

These classes are not an exhaustive list of possibilities and additional classes of service can be considered with approval from Rail Events Inc. once an event plan has been submitted.

Décor: As seen in the film, the coaches on the train itself have minimal décor, however all THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride events must decorate the interiors of the coaches. This enhances the event and brings the Christmas spirit on board. The train must be decorated with classic Christmas decorations and THE POLAR EXPRESS™ template décor. Included in the design should be, but is not limited to, pine garland, ornaments, wrapped Christmas gifts, and Christmas lights. To enhance the décor it is suggested that decorations be done in a THE POLAR EXPRESS™ blue and gold theme, with red and green accent colors as well. The use of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ branded ornaments is recommended to further enhance the branded feel of the décor. It is also suggested that gift wrapping paper resemble the patterns of the gift wrapping seen in the film. Additional décor such as Christmas trees, window decals, table coverings, and vintage luggage may be appropriate to incorporate into the coaches. The train must not be themed with elements or décor that are from brands other than THE POLAR EXPRESS™. Seat numbers, signage, and other printed materials should be produced on a branded templates. This might also include any window decals or table coverings and wraps.

Sound Design: From the moment of boarding to the time that passengers alight from the train, there should be music or sound playing on board to create an immersive environment and transport passengers to the world of THE POLAR EXPRESS™. The sound design should thoughtfully consider all the elements of the event script and run of show that each host will work from. Using the music from the film is the most important of all audio elements, but expanding upon it, hosts should use as many additional sounds as possible. Pre-recorded script elements of character voice overs add artistic professionalism to the train ride. Any housekeeping announcements, such as boarding or safety announcements should be pre-recorded for a better overall presentation.

At a minimum, the “Suite from the Polar Express” by Alan Silvestri, must be heard as the train departs the depot. This composition is iconic and is heard at many times throughout the film. It can be used at other times to create a dramatic themed environment. It is recommended that “The Polar Express” performed by Tom Hanks be played at an appropriate point during the train ride. “Hot Chocolate” performed by Tom Hanks, must be played during the Hot Chocolate dance and to initiate the Hot Chocolate service. At the end of the train ride, “Believe” performed by Josh Groban, must be heard either on the train or outside as the passengers alight. This song captures all the essential themes that are a part of the event and is ideal as a capstone for the ending moments of the passengers’ journey.

Host railroads are required in advance of their opening to submit for approval the event playlist to Rail Events Inc. The playlist should be incorporated into the script to ensure that each member of the cast has a clear understanding of music and pre-recorded voice overs to be used during the event. In addition, each host is solely responsible for obtaining all necessary music rights from the copyright proprietors of such music and such other persons or entities, including performing rights societies.

Sound systems used on THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must always be of good quality, able to produce clear, undistorted, full range sound, with even coverage across the entire passenger listening area. The volume level must be easily audible over the baseline noise level of the train as it travels down the track. Rail Events Inc. staff can assist with analyzing existing systems and can provide suggestions for how to achieve the best possible sound quality.

Lighting Design: When considering lighting choices for on board the train, there are many items from the film that can be used as influence for the final lighting look of the coaches. In THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film, the coaches as conceived by the film's designers have a lighting look that is soft, warm, and not overly bright. Lighting should be used by the host to create a cozy but festive holiday atmosphere. There is plenty of room here for artistic license, but lighting should take its influence from the source material whenever possible. Christmas lights should be warm and golden white, as they are in the North Pole images. It is important that the lights are soft enough to set the mood, yet still bright enough to see the presentation. It is suggested that overhead lights, especially any fluorescent lights be turned off. These create an unnecessarily harsh and distracting environment that detracts from the desired feeling.

Script and Run of Show: Executing a well-run and cohesive event can only be accomplished when every member of the cast and crew is working from the same script or run of show. It is required, and entirely essential, that each host create a single script that includes all elements of the event that must be brought together in real time to create a polished cohesive show. A properly created script and run of show should include the entire dialog that characters might or will use during the event, and all notes regarding the time that different event elements must be executed. The goal should be that no character or member of that staff be required to improvise without a very clear direction or intention. When created properly this should result in consistency and eliminate significant differences in passenger experience from one coach to another.

The Polar Express Story: Presenting *The Polar Express* story by Chris Van Allsburg is a required element of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. The story presentation must be engaging, free of distractions, and set the tone, all the while building excitement for the arrival at the North Pole. A pre-approved recording of the story will be provided by Rail Events Inc. and must be played on board the train. During the presentation of the story, onboard costumed characters, including but not limited to, Conductor, the Hobo, or Chefs and Waiters must be showing illustrations directly from *The Polar Express* book, as well as quietly focusing the passenger's attention on the story. It is recommended that the oversized book is used on board for venues that have a large enough aisle to accommodate the size of the book. Interpretations or renderings of imagery directly from the story other than those of the author's are not appropriate and must not be shown.

Focus can be directed to the story by actively showing illustrations, allowing passengers to assist while turning pages, and encouraging listening to the story. Using non-vocal actions to promote listening while discouraging side conversations and other interruptions is also essential. Characters and staff must not be talking or leading any interactions that do not directly influence the passengers' attention to the story.

Use of Cast and Characters: Having the appropriate cast to portray THE POLAR EXPRESS™ characters on board the train is crucial for recreating scenes and properly representing the story.

The Conductor is required to be on board the train and incorporated into the performance. It is also required that Chefs or Waiters are present and serve the passengers with Hot Chocolate and a cookie in an artistic and creative manner representative of the iconic Hot Chocolate scene from the film. The Hobo as well as the Hero Boy must be included in the event in a variety of capacities, and above all, Santa and his Elves must appear to personally deliver the first gift of Christmas to each and every child. Additional characters such as the Know-It-All Kid, Billy, and the Hero Girl should be present during the event to the best of the venue's ability. The more characters that can be incorporated will increase the time that each passenger is able to interact with and be immersed in the story.

Event staff that does not fit a specific film character role can be portrayed as generic characters such as Stewards. While not specifically branded, they might be dressed in slacks, vests, or bow ties to fit within the overall aesthetic of the film. This will give the event a feel of professionalism and is a nice way to fill in gaps where certain characters do not belong.

It is important that all characters are dressed in the appropriate costume for their role and that they stay in character at all times. It is crucial that the onboard cast and crew represent the event as a whole and provide the best customer service for passengers even if this means tending to requests outside of their immediate job scope. For further information regarding the cast and characters see (SECTION 11: Cast).

Catering: Catering logistics, quality of the product, and proper service are important elements in providing the best Hot Chocolate possible to passengers. Hot Chocolate service takes place immediately after the choreographed Hot Chocolate dance set to the Hot Chocolate song from the film. In addition to Hot Chocolate, it is required that all passengers receive a tasty cookie. While there are numerous options available for the cookie, a sugar cookie is suggested for most hosts. For further information regarding catering see (SECTION 9: Catering).

Housekeeping: General housekeeping must be considered when hosting THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. This includes but is not limited to safety announcements, clean equipment, an elegant method of onboard trash collection, onboard restroom cleaning, coach maintenance, and any required spot cleaning following each trip.

Train Fundamentals

- ➔ Each round trip should be a minimum of one (1) hour in length and not exceed one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes
- ➔ It is important that unsightly and inappropriate visuals seen by passengers be minimized during the event
- ➔ Coaches must be equipped with adequate audio equipment that is able to produce clear, undistorted, full range sound, with even coverage across the entire passenger listening area
- ➔ Regardless of class of service, all passengers must share the same event experience
- ➔ The train must be decorated with classic Christmas decorations and THE POLAR EXPRESS™ template décor
- ➔ From the moment of boarding to the time that passengers alight from the train, there should be music or sound playing on board to create an immersive environment and transport passengers to the world of THE POLAR EXPRESS™
- ➔ Host railroads are required in advance of their opening to submit for approval their event's playlist to Rail Events Inc.
- ➔ Each host is solely responsible for obtaining all necessary music rights from the copyright proprietors of such music and such other persons or entities, including performing rights societies
- ➔ It is required, and entirely essential, that each host create a single script that includes all elements of the event that must be brought together in real time to create a polished cohesive show
- ➔ Presenting *The Polar Express* story by Chris Van Allsburg is a required element of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride
- ➔ A pre-approved recording of the story will be provided by Rail Events Inc. and must be played onboard the train
- ➔ Interpretations or renderings of imagery directly from the story other than those of the author's are not appropriate and must not be shown
- ➔ Characters and staff must not be talking or leading any interactions that do not directly influence the passenger's attention to the story
- ➔ It is important that all characters are dressed in the appropriate costume for their role and that they stay in character at all times

Section 7 The North Pole

Overview: After the train travels its northbound journey “through cold, dark forests, where lean wolves roamed and white-tailed rabbits hid”, the passengers finish their Hot Chocolate and the presentation of the story comes to a close, the excitement and anticipation now begins to build on board for the train’s arrival at the North Pole.

“We just crossed it. Latitude sixty six degrees, thirty three minutes north.
The Arctic Circle. And do you see? Those lights in the distance.
They look like the lights of a strange ocean liner sailing on a frozen sea.
There, is the North Pole.”

The North Pole is the major visual focal point during THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. At the North Pole, “a huge city standing alone at the top of the world, filled with factories”, Santa and his Elves will be waiting to greet the passengers upon the train’s arrival. After the train has pulled slowly past all the factories and everyone has seen Santa, he will climb on board to personally deliver the first gift of Christmas to each child.

Venue: The North Pole is located at a distance that allows an approximately thirty (30) minute trip from the originating terminal. While the distance itself is not critical, the train speed and ability to maintain an approximately one (1) hour long round trip is most important. The North Pole set must be designed to represent the imagery seen in the film. The most iconic elements from the film including the clock tower, the large golden lit Christmas tree, and Santa’s sleigh with a large red toy bag are required at the North Pole.

Scenic Design: The artists who created the film’s North Pole sought inspiration from Chris Van Allsburg’s masterful illustrations, and also from the architecture of the Pullman Car Company’s factory on the South Side of Chicago. Prominent architectural elements used to inspire the film include the clock tower of the Pullman Administration Building, which stands dominantly over the skyline, as well as the many arches of the Pullman Market Hall. Several of the other factory and office buildings of the Pullman factory offered inspiration of architectural elements used in the North Pole design. These elements must be considered when designing the North Pole set for the event. In addition to the Pullman elements, a towering, golden lit Christmas tree must also be implemented as one of the central focal points at the North Pole. Most importantly however, Santa and his sleigh with a large red overstuffed toy bag must be present, accompanied by as many Elves as a host can gather to dance and greet the train with excitement upon arrival.

Additional elements to consider in the North Pole set design could include a floor designed as the compass with all four directions pointing south as seen in the film as well as a team of reindeer for Santa’s sleigh. If reindeer are a desired addition to the set design, it is suggest that careful planning and increased attention to detail be adhered to so as to avoid the potentially distracting look of commonly available commercial décor.

Décor: The North Pole décor is simple, clean, and representative of what is seen in the film. Classic holiday décor including garland, holly, and bells may be seen around the North Pole. The giant Christmas tree should shine gold in color and be topped with a bright golden star and its decorations inspired directly from the film. Other décor pieces used should represent elements from the film. There must not be any décor that is branded or themed from any other Christmas stories or competing brands. This includes, but is not limited to characters from other films or stories, gingerbread houses, generic holiday props, inflatable décor, or lit signs. It is also recommended that station signs that state “The North Pole” not be used as they do not appear in any of the imagery from the film. All elements must accurately represent, or be inspired directly by THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film.

Lighting Design: Like the scenic design and décor, the lighting at the North Pole should take its inspiration from the film. The Christmas lights on the buildings and tree should all be soft warm golden white, outlining all the buildings and rooflines. The Christmas tree in the film is draped with warm golden white lights but is also distinctly lit with golden colored spotlights from the ground. This can be an interesting element to bring to life. If there is a desire to use colored lights, consider using them high up in the air to represent the Northern Lights, or use them on trees or scenic elements that are not directly connected to the North Pole set, possibly on the opposite side of the train or in other creative ways.

Sound Design: For railroads that use passenger coaches with open windows, the integration of a sound design at the North Pole is another element that can be incorporated for added interest. In the film, the North Pole is enveloped in Christmas music playing from scratchy and sometimes skipping record players. This can be recreated as an audio track separate from the onboard audio and played outside the train to add to the magic of this mysterious place. In addition, the sounds of hundreds of Elves and the jingle of reindeer’s sleigh bells could be heard.

Use of Cast and Characters: To bring life to the North Pole, filling the city with the appropriate characters is important in recreating the overall scene and feeling of excitement. Of course, Santa must be present at the North Pole for all the passengers to see, and on this important night he should be accompanied by his Elves as they leave the factories to see Santa depart into the “cold, dark polar sky” on his Christmas Eve trip around the world.

“There should be Elves. Where are the Elves?”

“They are gathering in the center of the city.”

Adding to these essential characters, the use of other characters such as the Hero Boy as a part of the first gift of Christmas scene can contribute to the authenticity of the North Pole. The North Pole scenes also included Conductor, Hero Girl, Billy, Know-It-All Kid and the other children from the train. Any of these characters are wonderful additions to the scene if they can be added. Any characters that are present must be in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costuming. For further information regarding the cast and characters see (SECTION 11: Cast). For further information regarding costuming see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Note: Variations of the North Pole set design and location due to differing characteristics of individual host venues are certainly understood by Rail Events Inc. Any changes to an individual presentation of the event from these guidelines must be submitted and approved by Rail Events Inc. as a part of an approved event plan, a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the start of the event. A completed event plan is essential in the development of a well-executed event and is a requirement of Rail Events Inc.

The North Pole Fundamentals

- ➔ The North Pole set must be designed to represent the imagery seen in the film
- ➔ The most iconic elements from the film including the clock tower, the large golden lit Christmas tree, and Santa's sleigh with a large red toy bag are required at the North Pole
- ➔ The artists who created the film's North Pole sought inspiration from Chris Van Allsburg's masterful illustrations, and also from the architecture of the Pullman Car Company's factory on the South Side of Chicago
- ➔ There must not be any décor that is branded or themed from any other Christmas stories or competing brands
- ➔ The Christmas lights on the buildings and tree should all be soft warm golden white, outlining all the buildings and rooflines
- ➔ Santa, accompanied by his elves, must be present at the North Pole for all the passengers to see
- ➔ Any characters that are present must be in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costuming

Section 8 Costuming

Overview: Costuming is an essential design element of any production, and in the case of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride, it plays a leading role in bringing to life the characters that everyone is familiar with. A well-executed costume design works on both the conscious and subconscious level to define a character and their persona before a performer even has an opportunity to speak. In the case of an event whose goal is to bring an existing work to life, attention to detail of character images essential. This not only immediately helps the audience to recognize characters and follow along throughout the story, but is also paramount from the perspective of brand assurance.

The goal of a high quality costume design is to recreate the characters as they appear in the film, and to establish an atmosphere which brings passengers into a new world. As we are working to recreate, not create, a design it is essential that the characters are dressed in the correct costumes as seen in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film. Event costumes should not simply take inspiration from the film, but rather incorporate attainable details of the existing designs without straying far or taking excessive artistic license. Unlike other design elements involved in this event, such as the North Pole design or even the script itself, costuming is reasonably attainable for any host to be authentic to the film. Correct costuming also plays a significant role in separating THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride from other generic Christmas train rides and events.

In addition to THE POLAR EXPRESS™ characters represented in the event, it is also required that all key staff members visible to the public eye are dressed in appropriate attire to fit within the theme of the event. This adds not only to the professionalism of the event but also to the themed atmosphere.

Characters: The following film characters can be portrayed in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. While this is not an exhaustive list, it represents the main characters most iconic to the story. Expanding on this cast list should a host desire is always encouraged. It is however required that characters with an asterisk (*) be included in each event.

- Conductor*
- Santa*
- Hobo*
- Chefs *
- Elves*
- Hero Boy*
- Waiters
- Know-It-All Kid
- Hero Girl
- Billy
- Steamer
- Smokey

Additional Costuming: Additional staff members such as generic cast members, greeters, ticket office staff, catering staff, operating staff, and any additional staff members who might be visible to the public must also be dressed appropriately to fit the theme. While their outfits should be non-branded to a specific character, they should fit the aesthetic design of THE POLAR EXPRESS™, and be professional looking. Some general dress and costume design options may include, but are not limited to:

- Black slacks
- White button down shirt
- Red, black, or royal blue dress vest
- Bow tie
- Generic railroad conductor's cap
- Santa hat
- THE POLAR EXPRESS™ branded pajamas
- THE POLAR EXPRESS™ branded bath robes
- Railroad Bib Overalls

Further information regarding specific character costume designs including artist's renderings, costume schedules and suggested vendors can be provided from Rail Events Inc. upon request.

Costuming Fundamentals

- ➔ It is important that the characters are dressed in the correct costumes as seen in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film
- ➔ Event costumes should not simply take inspiration from the film, but rather incorporate attainable details of the existing designs without straying far or taking excessive artistic license
- ➔ Correct costuming also plays a significant role in separating THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride from other generic Christmas train rides and events
- ➔ It is required that all key staff members visible to the public eye are dressed in appropriate attire to fit within the theme of the event

Section 9 Catering

Overview: Most people would agree that one of the most memorable scenes from THE POLAR EXPRESS™ starts with a simple public address announcement from the Conductor.

“Your attention, please.
Are there any Polar Express passengers in need of refreshment?”

Chefs in traditional white uniforms and Waiters in vests and aprons burst through the coach door and the children on board are served Hot Chocolate “as thick and rich as melted chocolate bars” through an energetic and entertaining choreographed performance. The recreation of this scene is a key element in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride and is important to be thoughtful of the original material when adapting it to providing Hot Chocolate service. In addition to serving Hot Chocolate taking inspiration from the original book, a delicious cookie is also served. While many possibilities exist here, a sugar cookie is most frequently used and is suggested by Rail Events Inc.

Hot Chocolate: Hot Chocolate must be served to all passengers on board THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. Perfecting the quality of the Hot Chocolate itself, as well as the service can be tricky and take substantial time and effort to realize. There are several items to keep in mind when preparing and designing Hot Chocolate service.

Taste: Serving guests with tasty, Hot Chocolate is crucial in providing a memorable experience and an enjoyable beverage. As described in the original book, the Hot Chocolate should taste “as thick and rich as melted chocolate bars.” Strict adherence to a recipe and preparation process are critical. Staff should sample Hot Chocolate every time a new batch is prepared to ensure good taste and overall quality.

Temperature: Hot Chocolate temperature can be a delicate business because it must be served hot, but not so hot that it is undrinkable, or worse, a safety concern. Keeping the temperature consistent can be a challenge and in an ideal world “we’ve only got one rule, never, ever let it cool.” Testing the delivery methods and rates of cooling is important in designing the Hot Chocolate service. Remember that a cold cup of Hot Chocolate will leave a negative impression on passengers often more readily than a quality cup will leave a positive one. Hot Chocolate should be served to passengers at no less than 135° Fahrenheit. This is considered to be an ideal temperature for children to drink the Hot Chocolate without the risk of accidentally burning themselves. It is important for those preparing the Hot Chocolate to test the temperature multiple times throughout the event, but especially immediately before serving to passengers.

Professional Catering Service: A professional catering company, restaurant, or local coffee shop are recommended be contracted to provide Hot Chocolate. Catering companies have the ability to staff the Hot Chocolate service with an adequate number of staff members trained in proper food handling safety requirements. Catering companies also have access to commercial grade catering equipment that may be difficult to obtain by individual hosts.

In-House Hot Chocolate: Preparing the Hot Chocolate in-house is certainly possible with proper equipment, planning, and of course Hot Chocolate mix. Hosts are encouraged to taste test several options of mixes as well as their selected Hot Chocolate blend before opening the event to ensure quality and delicious taste.

Whichever method is selected for Hot Chocolate service, when determining Hot Chocolate quantities, it is important to account for lap children who might not have their own ticket and be included in passenger manifest counts. Hosts should always be prepared to make extra quantities in the event of a spill, low temperature, or other unexpected situations. To further enhance the Hot Chocolate experience it may be served with a sipping straw, or garnished with whipped cream.

Cookies: Every passenger on board THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must receive a tasty cookie to be enjoyed alongside their Hot Chocolate. A sugar cookie is the most widely chosen, and highly recommended, cookie among venues hosting the event and is recommended by Rail Events Inc. Cookies should be a minimum of three inches in diameter and served in a sleeve, wrapping, or be pre-packaged for safe food handling practices. Prepackaged cookies should be of gourmet quality, not generic prepackaged cookies that are easily recognized as a common brand. Cookies served must be free of nuts. Cookie flavors and options may include sugar cookies, chocolate chip cookies, ginger cookies, molasses cookies, iced sugar cookies, white chocolate chip cookies, or virtually anything else that hosts would like to make a part of the event. Host railroads should choose a cookie that is to their liking, works well in their specific venue, and enjoyable for their passengers. Characteristics to consider in this decision might include potential messes from chocolate or soft icings in coaches with upholstered seating, or cookies that tend to be crumbly instead of holding together. Treats other than cookies may be served with prior approval from Rail Events Inc.

Rail Events Inc. recommends that cookies are prepared by a professional catering company, restaurant, or bakery, and delivered fresh daily or pre-packaged and purchased in bulk. Whichever method is selected, vendors must be capable of producing large quantities of cookies and able to deliver them fresh and on time. Remember that there should always be plenty of extra cookie above the projected ridership because of lap children without tickets and in the event of an unexpected situation. It is always a recommended practice to stock up or freeze extras, always allowing there to be at least one day's worth available on hand.

Health Requirements: It is the responsibility of each host to ensure food safety. A food service professional is recommended to be in charge of the Hot Chocolate and cookie service. All food handlers must prepare Hot Chocolate and cookies with clean hands, food safe gloves, and hair tied back while adhering to all local, state and federal food handling regulations. In addition, it is required that an ingredient list for all food items to be served on board the train be available for passenger inquires.

Allergies and Special Dietary Needs: Each host venue is responsible for their own allergy and special dietary needs accommodation policies and procedures. Special training should take place with staff so that every person involved in the event is aware, and understands the host's allergy accommodation policies, and knows what to do when related questions or situations arise.

In addition to training staff on these policies, it is suggested that the policy be listed on the host's website, in their frequently asked questions, and included within reminder or confirmation emails sent to ticket holders.

Suggesting to passengers with special dietary needs, that they are able to bring their own beverage or snack on board can assist with accommodating dietary restrictions. Hosts should inform guests to let the staff know ahead of time if there are any special dietary needs to help them accommodate.

Catering Equipment: Preparing Hot Chocolate in the proper catering equipment is important to ensure quality, consistent temperature, and the ability to mass produce efficiently. Professional grade catering equipment can be utilized to increase the efficiency of the Hot Chocolate preparation process and ensure a constant, proper temperature when served to passengers. The following equipment can be incorporated into any Hot Chocolate process:

- **Insulated Beverage Containers:** These are suggested to mix the Hot Chocolate and keep it hot prior to pouring into cups and serving. Most insulated beverage containers can keep liquids hot for up to six hours. Labeling the containers with the time and temperature of the batch immediately after making it helps to keep the Hot Chocolate on a fresh cycle for every train trip. When sourcing these containers, ensure that they are specifically designed for use with hot liquids.
- **Mixers:** Using a food grade stainless steel power drill is the most effective way to mix the Hot Chocolate thoroughly before pouring into cups or insulated beverage containers.
- **Hot Bags:** Similar to pizza delivery bags, these are great tools to keep the Hot Chocolate hot after pouring it into branded cups. It is recommended that each hot bag be lined with a food service tray and stacked no more than three trays with cups high at a time. This method ensures that the Hot Chocolate will remain hot until it is time to deliver the cups to passengers.
- **Branded Cups:** Rail Events Inc. requires that branded cups be purchased for THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. These cups come branded with customized artwork evocative of the event and are designed to keep the Hot Chocolate warm over an extended period as compared to many typical cups. Cups should be served with a lid that closes tightly for safety, temperature control, and is easy to drink from.
- **First Class Mugs:** Any ticketed passengers in a coach priced above Standard Class and advertised as First Class must receive THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded mug to take home as a souvenir. While not required, it is recommended that Hot Chocolate is served in a THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded paper cup then placed inside the ceramic mug, rather than serving the Hot Chocolate directly into the mug. This concept allows better control of the temperature and a clean and sanitary option for the upgraded class of service, while still possessing the aesthetic of serving in the mugs. This also makes for an easier cleanup for the on board staff.

For further information regarding Rail Events Inc. cups, lids, and First Class mugs see (SECTION 14: Retail Products, Premiums and Event Accessories).

Delivery Methods: There are a variety of delivery methods appropriate for the onboard Hot Chocolate service. Concessions or vendor trays, often referred to as Hawker's Trays, are a convenient method to allow one staff member to carry multiple Hot Chocolate cups and serve them at the same time. It is also possible to place all the cups of Hot Chocolate on a cart and dance through the aisle while serving Hot Chocolate. Cookies should be served from a basket or another container that fits the look and aesthetic of the event. Cookies should be individually wrapped, sleeved, sealed with a THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded sticker, and served with a THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded napkin. Flat waiter trays should never be used for actual drink delivery service while the train is in motion.

Additional Food and Beverage: Additional food and beverage service may be provided at the event for passengers at the depot or terminal area. Should a host venue choose to provide additional services, items should not include Hot Chocolate or cookies (unless another onboard treat is to be used) as passengers will enjoy those on the train. It is advised that staff members discourage passengers from bringing meals or other food items on board to eliminate the distraction and accompanying odor.

Catering Fundamentals

- ➔ Hot Chocolate must be served to all passengers on board THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride
- ➔ Staff should sample Hot Chocolate every time a new batch is prepared to ensure good taste and overall quality
- ➔ Hot Chocolate should be served to passengers at no less than 135°Fahrenheit. This is considered to be an ideal temperature for children to drink the Hot Chocolate without the risk of accidentally burning themselves
- ➔ Hosts should always be prepared to make extra quantities in the event of a spill, low temperature, or other unexpected situations
- ➔ Every passenger on board THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride must receive a tasty cookie to be enjoyed alongside their Hot Chocolate
- ➔ Cookies or other treats served must be free of nuts
- ➔ A food service professional is recommended to be in charge of the Hot Chocolate and cookie service
- ➔ Special training should take place with staff so that every person involved in the event is aware, and understands the host's allergy accommodation policies, and knows what to do when related questions or situations arise
- ➔ It is required that an ingredient list for all food items to be served on board the train be available for passenger inquires
- ➔ Suggesting to passengers with special dietary needs, that they are able to bring their own beverage or snack on board can assist with accommodating dietary restrictions
- ➔ It is advised that staff members discourage passengers from bringing meals or other food items on board to eliminate the distraction and accompanying odor

Section 10 Event Staffing

Overview: Host venues must staff their event with motivated, energetic, and engaging employees or volunteers. In addition to the host railroad's Event Coordinator and train operation crew several areas will need to be staffed accordingly. While each event can be significantly different in the number of individual staff members needed to successfully execute the event, some general guidelines for staffing quantities are included for initial brainstorming.

Management and Key Staff: Each event must have at a minimum of one (1) Event Manager who takes charge of all aspects of the event and oversees its creation and execution. In the case of their absence on any given event day or night, another appointed on-duty manager able to handle any of the job functions is essential. Larger events might need to divide job functions and employ department level managers dependent on the scale of the event. Individual departments having their own managers might include Production, Front of House, Ticketing, Retail, Catering, Train Operations, Customer Service, etc.

Onboard Performers: Each coach must have a minimum of two (2) performers at all times. In situations where the capacity of a coach exceeds seventy (70) passengers, then it is recommended that there are three (3) performers per coach. These limits and recommendations do not require that the same specific performers be in the same coach at all times but rather that the minimum number, regardless of specific character, be present to keep the passengers engaged with the event. When a coach is left without any performers or even just a single performer, the passenger's level of engagement significantly decreases. The characters required for the event, including their minimum quantities, are:

- Conductor: minimum one (1) per train. THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Conductor must not be the operating crew conductor.
- Chefs: minimum two (2) per coach during Hot Chocolate service.
- Hobo: minimum one (1) per event.
- Hero Boy: minimum one (1) per event.
- Santa: minimum one (1) per train. Santa must have enough time to spend at least seven (7) seconds per passenger in each coach. If the ride duration or train capacity does not allow for this time requirement then additional Santas will be required.
- Elves: Minimum one (1) to accompany each Santa. A minimum of two (2) Elves must be present at the North Pole, but it is strongly encouraged to have as many Elves as possible at the North Pole.

Catering: Each venue is different but generally a typical host requires three (3) or four (4) staff members to handle making and pouring Hot Chocolate. Depending on the delivery and distribution methods, additional staff will often be required. It is essential to consider the appropriate number of catering staff members for production, delivery, and clean up within the allotted turnaround time of departures. There may be times where more staff is required for pouring Hot Chocolate and less in between departures.

Technician: Each venue must have a minimum of one (1) technician on board the train and available at the depot to operate lighting, sound or other technical elements. Because of the multitude of locations involved within the event, a second technician or an assistant is recommended so that technicians can be in multiple locations. A dedicated North Pole technician is also suggested.

Ticketing: Each venue has different needs for their ticket office, but there are several things to take into account when determining the appropriate staffing levels. Generally an absolute minimum of two (2) ticket agents should be on site at any given time. There should be enough agents at each location to accommodate passengers checking in, picking up tickets, purchasing tickets, exchanging tickets or reservations, and to answer customer service related questions. It is also important to factor in the amount of time between scheduled departures, and how many passengers are estimated to be processed through the ticketing lines in a given period of time.

Retail: Retail shop requirements can vary significantly between venues based on the physical layout. At a minimum each retail store should likely have three (3) staff members so that two (2) are available to cash out purchases while another is available to work the floor, bring in back stock, and answer passenger questions. Hosts should take into consideration the volume of passengers that might come through the retail store in a given period of time based on the departure schedule and the event or train capacities. These factors can significantly increase the number of retail store staff members that might be deemed adequate.

Parking Lot Attendants: Each parking lot should ideally have a minimum of one (1) attendant to assist passengers with instructions, directions, and other special needs. Where applicable, consider additional staff as required for selling parking lot tickets, directing traffic, assisting with parking spaces, and other services that might be required. Parking attendants should be knowledgeable about the event and be able to answer most questions passengers may have.

Additional Activities: If additional activities, such as children's coloring stations, film viewing, or letters to Santa are provided at the event, there should be enough staff members to oversee, manage, and assist with passenger needs related to these activities.

First Aid: At least one (1) staff member on site and on board the train should have basic first aid and CPR training in the case of an emergency. All staff members at the event should be aware of who that person is and how to contact them. Specific requirements of the host venue's Safety Training Plan will supplement this requirement where applicable. Further to these recommendations, it is officially the responsibility of the host to ensure safety measures are in place for their passengers, and Rail Events Inc. is unable to provide any daily oversight and does not accept responsibility for the host's failure to comply with these recommendations.

Photographers: If the host includes a professional photography element into their event, they will need to consider the period of time that each photograph requires and the estimated number of passengers who will take advantage of the service. Staffing enough photographers to avoid the creation of long lines is essential to provide a quality service.

Security: Trained security personnel possess the skills to react and respond to critical situations that may occur during the event. To enhance the overall safety of the event and provide a better response in the event of an incident, Rail Events Inc. recommends that all hosts provide security personnel for the duration of the event. The unique nature of each venue's security needs is such that each individual host will need to formulate a plan for staffing and placement of security personnel at the event. Further to these recommendations, it is officially the responsibility of the host to ensure safety measures are in place for their passengers, and Rail Events Inc. is unable to provide any daily oversight and does not accept responsibility for the host's failure to comply with these recommendations.

Event Staffing Fundamentals

- ➔ Each event must have at a minimum of one (1) Event Manager who takes charge of all aspects of the event and oversees its creation and execution
- ➔ Larger events might need to divide job functions and employ department level managers dependent on the scale of the event
- ➔ Each coach must have a minimum of two (2) performers at all times
- ➔ When a coach is left without any performers or even just a single performer, the passenger's level of engagement significantly decreases
- ➔ It is essential to consider the appropriate number of catering staff members for production, delivery, and clean up within the allotted turnaround time of departures
- ➔ Each venue must have a minimum of one (1) technician onboard the train and available at the depot to operate lighting, sound or other technical elements
- ➔ There should be enough agents at each location to accommodate passengers checking in, picking up tickets, purchasing tickets, exchanging tickets or reservations, and to answer passenger questions
- ➔ To enhance the overall safety of the event and provide decreased response times in the event of an incident, Rail Events Inc. recommends that all hosts provide security personnel for the duration of the event

Section 11 Cast

Overview: The cast of the event is among the most crucial elements in creating immersion and establishing the true excitement of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. Cast members not only provide entertainment, but also play several important roles in the event including customer service, representing the brand, as well as establishing an image of the host venue as a whole. It is important that all cast members are professional, energetic, and motivated to provide passengers with a truly memorable experience. All characters must remain in character at all times; never stepping out of the role they are playing.

Casting When casting the event, it is essential to cast enough people to play each of the required roles in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride, but even more importantly, to cast enough performers to create the desired atmosphere on board each passenger coach. Before being specific about the characters themselves, a minimum of two (2) performers in each passenger coach at any given time is required throughout the duration of the event. It is however recommended that in larger equipment three (3) performers are employed. Larger equipment is loosely defined as coaches with a capacity in excess of seventy (70) passengers, or those coaches that are divided into more than one compartment that will be used for passenger service. It is possible to utilize cast members in different roles throughout the event by using costume changes and having them work as different characters in different coaches. When casting, the strongest performers should be utilized in leading roles to enhance the experience for all passengers. The following list outlines the required cast members as well as additional cast members that can be added to continue to enhance the event.

Required Cast Members: The following list of characters must be incorporated into the event.

Conductor: At a minimum each event must cast one (1) THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Conductor per train. They must accurately play the role of the Conductor as seen in the film, paying as much attention as possible to the character's actions and mannerisms. It is required that this character perform an opening prologue or welcome at the event prior to passenger boarding, taking influence from the initial boarding scene with the Hero Boy in the film. While on board the train the Conductor must interact with passengers in each coach and lead the Golden Ticket punching. It is required that the Conductor character is not the actual operating crew conductor of record, but rather a performer so that they can devote their full attention to the event instead of the operational needs of the train. Punching tickets with the word "Believe" or with the letter "B" is encouraged. In addition to punching tickets, the Conductor should participate in the performance by singing, dancing, and sharing the story with the passengers as it all fits within the script.

If the specific event logistics would benefit from it, multiple Conductors can be used on board the train. This helps improve entertainment value as well as with timing to punch tickets and many other event elements. If multiple Conductors are used, effort should be taken so that no more than one Conductor is ever visible to passengers at the same time. If this cannot be achieved, designate one Conductor to be The Polar Express Conductor, while others we perceive as his assistants. In addition to the Conductor uniform, THE POLAR EXPRESS™ hat badge and lapel pins must be worn, which must be sourced from Rail Events Inc. For further information regarding costuming see (SECTION 8: Costuming). For further information regarding Event Accessories see (SECTION 14: Retail Products, Premiums and Event Accessories).

Chefs and Waiters: Each event is required to have a minimum of two (2) Chefs per coach during Hot Chocolate service. Chefs play an important role in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride during the Hot Chocolate song, dance, and of course service of the beverage and a cookie. While Chefs are traditionally more common in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride events, Waiters are equally important in the film and should be represented on board the train, especially during the Hot Chocolate service portion of the event. They should be energetic, talented, and able to memorize and perform a choreographed dance which is often one of the highlights of the event. They must also be able to lift containers of Hot Chocolate and carefully serve it to passengers. Chefs should also be trained to collect trash and answer any questions about the food provided on board. While not required, it is acceptable for Chefs or Waiters to act as the car host for the duration of the ride. Chefs and Waiters must be costumed in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costumes. For further information regarding costuming see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Santa: Believe, the underlying theme of THE POLAR EXPRESS™, cannot be properly portrayed without a visit from Santa. The opportunity of each child to meet Santa is one of the most memorable elements in THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. Each host is required to have a minimum of one (1) Santa per event.

When the train arrives at the North Pole, Santa must be visible in or near his sleigh as the train pulls slowly by. Considering the specific location of the sleigh is essential to ensure an exceptional viewing opportunity for all the train's passengers. Santa's distance from the tracks should be close enough that passengers can clearly see details, yet it should not be so close that he can only be seen for a brief moment as the train pulls slowly past. Providing quality lighting for Santa and his sleigh is required. Lights from the ground in front of him as well as using backlights to help him stand out from the background will make viewing much easier. It can be very advantageous to allow the lit area to be large enough that Santa can move some while not stepping out of his light. Ensure that Santa knows exactly where he should stand so that he is always lit for the passengers to see. Once Santa has boarded and the train begins its homeward journey, Santa should make his grand entrance into each coach using scripted material directly from the film.

“The first gift of Christmas!

This bell is a wonderful symbol of the spirit of Christmas, as am I.

Just remember the true spirit of Christmas lies in your heart. Merry Christmas.”

To maximize the passengers' experience, the time that Santa spends with each child on board the train should be carefully calculated and adjusted accordingly to accommodate special situations. When coaching Santa, host venues must remind him that he needs not spend an excessive amount of time with each child, but allow enough for good eye contact, a magical interaction, and a photo if desired. Santa's visit should never feel rushed, but he also should not spend excessive time with any one child potentially being detrimental to the suspension of disbelief. Santa must also personally give each child the first gift of Christmas, a Silver Bell. To promote the theme of believe and increase the level of engagement with all passengers, adults must also be given a Silver Bell. Silver Bells may be given to adults by Elves assisting Santa.

Providing Santa an appropriate and sufficient amount of time is a basic minimum requirement. Each event is required to allow Santa a minimum of seven (7) seconds per passenger onboard the train. This minimum is not designed to specify the time Santa actually spends with each passenger, but rather a basis to a mathematical means to determine the total amount of time Santa should take to visit with all of the passengers. Using this minimum, a family seated together with two (2) adults and two (2) children should be allotted twenty eight (28) seconds of time to spend with Santa. Assuming Santa spends a slightly different amount of time with each member of the family, he should have sufficient time to visit with each child to interact, give out a Silver Bell, and keep the suspension of disbelief, as well as to acknowledge the adults. More importantly, common sense should be exercised when planning the timing component of visits with Santa. Accommodations for those children with special needs along with additional time spent while Santa traverses between coaches must be accounted for when scripting this portion of the event.

Depending on timing and train capacity some hosts might require additional Santas to fulfill this minimum. If there are only thirty five (35) minutes available for Santa's visit and capacity exceeds three hundred (300) passengers per train, then multiple Santas will be necessary to fulfill this requirement.

In events that require multiple Santas some additional logistical challenges can present themselves. It is essential that two (2) or more Santas are never seen by any member of the public simultaneously. There should be a specifically designed method of logistics to keep multiple Santas from ever inadvertently ending up in the same place at the same time. Designated hiding spots on board the train that passengers cannot see in or out of is important in accomplishing this goal. While taking into account where specifically on the train Santa will board at the North Pole or possibly just the illusion of that Santa boarding, the staging location of additional Santas needs to be carefully considered. Often times the North Pole Santa will board on one end of the train and the second Santa will wait on the opposite far end. At their time to enter the train, both will work through the train and meet in the middle at a designated vestibule with its windows blocked out. One possible variation to this is to have one (1) Santa hiding on the center of the train and the other board the train at the end. Both Santas can work in the same direction to never cross paths or meet. Each Santa should know their designated coaches to work so that they never accidentally overlap.

Additionally, other than at the North Pole, Santa should never be seen off the train or at the depot prior to the train's return. If photography with Santa and his Elves is to be offered upon the train's return to the depot or boarding area, a secluded location should be chosen to prevent those passengers waiting for subsequent departures from viewing these characters. If a Santa needs to be shuttled from the depot back to the North Pole for a second train departure, he should change out of his costume prior to getting in the shuttle if there is a chance he might be spotted. This ensures that no passenger, especially a child, will ever see him out of character. In addition, to maintain the magic, it is crucial that Santa is never seen in costume either before or after the event while passengers are in sight.

Santa should be costumed in the proper THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Santa costume. If the host venue does not have the ability to obtain or build the exact THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Santa costume, traditional Santa costumes can be acceptable, but effort should be made to be as accurate to the film's costume design as possible. If multiple Santas are used it is important that all Santa costumes match.

Elves: Each event is required to have a minimum of one (1) Elf to accompany each Santa while onboard the train. Elves should never be seen prior to the train's arrival at the North Pole. The only exception is when helping Santa deliver Silver Bells on board the train, in which case they should never have been visible in a scene or location without Santa himself. Host venues should recruit as many Elves as possible to make a large impact at the North Pole. Elves should all be full of energy and excitement for the arrival of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ and the ceremonious giving of the first gift of Christmas. For further information regarding Elf costuming see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Hobo: Each event is required to include a minimum of one (1) Hobo per train. The Hobo is an outstanding character to add a touch of mystery as well as humor to the event. He is iconic to the film as he does not represent any traditional Christmas season characters, but is completely unique in his contribution to the story. The Hobo represents many different themes throughout the film and can be utilized in several different capacities during the event. He can be seen at the depot, staged with a campfire and interacting with passengers, or he can be on board the train recreating any one of several scenes from the film. The Hobo must use accurate lines from the film to authentically portray his character. As the Hobo is the only character that is dressed in conventional clothing, it is essential that he be costumed in such a manner that sets his character apart from any other member of the cast, staff or general public. The Hobo must wear the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costume including rugged pants and coat, red fingerless gloves, and a grubby denim shirt. It is important that the Hobo costume takes very specific inspiration from the film and does not just represent dirty clothes. It is also encouraged for him to use props he had during the film such as his bindle stick, cup of joe, or his unusual and fascinating hurdy gurdy.

Hero Boy: It is through the eyes of the Hero Boy as an adult, that his story of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ is told. Incorporating the Hero Boy into the event adds a great value to the production. The Hero Boy can be available in many different capacities during the event. He can be present at the depot, mingling with guests and performing the initial boarding scene with the Conductor or he can be on board the train performing scenes with different onboard characters. The Hero Boy can also be at the North Pole with Santa as he is presented with the first gift of Christmas. The Hero Boy must be dressed in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costume. Whatever scene the host venue chooses to use, they are all excellent ways to enhance the event.

Additional Cast Members: While not required, the following characters can be included within the event to create a more immersive experience.

Know-It-All Kid: The Know-It-All Kid is another way to add humor into the event. This character should travel through the train reenacting his scenes. He may interact with passengers quizzing them on their knowledge of the locomotive.

Billy: Billy is a character who can be added on board the train, at the North Pole, or in a small scene on the return train ride home. As seen in the film, the train drops him off at his house which has a large red and white striped present waiting for him on the front porch.

Hero Girl: The Hero Girl can be utilized in several different scenes throughout the event. She may reenact scenes with the Hero Boy or the Conductor, or she might sing her beautiful duet with Billy, “When Christmas Comes to Town”. The Hero Girl should be costumed in her nightgown as seen in the film.

Steamer and Smokey: Steamer is THE POLAR EXPRESS™ engineer and Smokey is the fireman. If they are visible to the passengers, the actual train crew might dress as these characters. They might also be represented in steam locomotives on static display, interacting with the passengers. Steamer and Smokey should be costumed in correct costumes from the film.

Non-branded general characters such as stewards can be utilized as car hosts, additional entertainers, and storytellers as long as cast members portraying key branded THE POLAR EXPRESS™ characters is given priority. Branded characters should be present and take the lead throughout the event. For further information regarding THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costuming see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Cast Fundamentals

- ➔ It is important that all cast members are professional, energetic, and motivated to provide passengers with a truly memorable experience
- ➔ All characters must remain in character at all times; never stepping out of the role they are playing
- ➔ At a minimum each event must cast one (1) THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Conductor per train
- ➔ It is required that the Conductor character is not the actual operating crew conductor of record, but rather a performer so that they can devote their full attention to the event instead of the operational needs of the train
- ➔ Each event is required to have a minimum of two (2) Chefs per coach during Hot Chocolate service
- ➔ Chefs and Waiters must be costumed in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ costumes
- ➔ Upon arrival at the North Pole, Santa must be visible in or near his sleigh as the train pulls slowly by
- ➔ Santa must personally give each child the first gift of Christmas, a Silver Bell
- ➔ To promote the theme of believe and increase the level of engagement with all passengers, adults must also be given a Silver Bell
- ➔ Silver Bells may be given to adults by Elves assisting Santa
- ➔ Each event is also required to allow Santa a minimum of seven (7) seconds per passenger on board the train. Depending on timing and train capacity some hosts might require additional Santas to fulfill this requirement
- ➔ It is essential that two (2) or more Santas are never seen by any member of the public simultaneously
- ➔ Each event is required to have a minimum of one (1) Elf to accompany each Santa while on board the train
- ➔ Other than at the North Pole, Santa should never be seen off the train or at the depot after the train's return
- ➔ Elves should never be seen prior to the train's arrival at the North Pole
- ➔ The Hobo must use accurate lines from the film to authentically portray his character
- ➔ As the Hobo is the only character that is dressed in conventional clothing, it is essential that he be costumed in such a manner that sets his character apart from any other member of the cast, staff, or general public
- ➔ The Hero Boy must be costumed in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ fashion
- ➔ Non branded general characters such as stewards can be utilized as car hosts, additional entertainers, and storytellers as long as portraying key branded THE POLAR EXPRESS™ characters is given priority

Section 12 Prologue

Overview: With the passengers gathered at the depot and platform in anticipation of boarding the train, the opportunity presents itself to showcase a memorable scene from the storyline and establish the event's immersion into the world of THE POLAR EXPRESS™. This scene, between the Hero Boy and Conductor, sets the scripted tone of the event and establishes the theme of believe. With this prologue, two integral characters draw the audience into the storyline and the train ride portion of the event begins.

Creative Basis: The initial boarding scene contains the first references to THE POLAR EXPRESS™ in both imagery and dialogue. As the Hero Boy runs from his bedroom and out into the street, he finds before him an imposing, shadowy locomotive shrouded in steam, and casting a golden glow from its headlight into the night sky. The train behind it fills the neighborhood street and illuminates the freshly fallen snow in a soft warm light through the frosty windows. In the distance, backlit and clouded by falling snow, a Conductor figure, lantern in hand, calls out

“All aboard...” “All aboard!”

After some initial doubt, the Hero Boy partially convinced by the Conductor, but filled with childhood curiosity makes the decision to climb aboard THE POLAR EXPRESS™ and join the other children on a magical journey to the North Pole filled with mystery, excitement, and learning.

Presentation: The prologue provides an opportunity for each venue to creatively present this key scene from THE POLAR EXPRESS™ film, which serves to excite and engage passengers prior to the start of the boarding process. An adaptation of the dialogue from the film's boarding scene is required within this prologue. The presentation should take place on an elevated platform adjacent to the train at the boarding platform and must include the Conductor and Hero Boy. Both cast members must be dressed in the correct THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride costumes. Rail Events Inc. acknowledges the unique infrastructure constraints of each venue, but every effort must be made to ensure that the scene be performed live. If venue constraints are such that a live presentation would not be visible to most passengers, and upon prior approval from Rail Events Inc., a pre-recorded voice over may be used. If the host desires to perform an alternate scene from the film or wishes to incorporate additional characters into the scene, consult with a Rail Events Inc. representative for further information regarding basic requirements and approval. For further information regarding costuming for all characters see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Dialogue: In addition to drawing the passengers' focus to the awaiting train, the dialogue presented within the prologue can serve as a means to create audience involvement. Drawing inspiration from the film, the exchange between the Conductor and Hero Boy should be as accurate as possible. Building upon the film's dialogue, the Conductor's performance should work to excite the crowd. Upon conclusion of the film scene, after the Hero Boy has boarded the train, the Conductor, in an aside, should invite the audience into the storyline, asking “Now how many of you would like to go to the North Pole? All aboard the Polar Express!” This call to action to the passengers awaiting boarding THE POLAR EXPRESS™ encourages participation and immersion. Consult with a Rail Events Inc. representative for further information about the scripting for this portion of the event.

Lighting Design: Taking inspiration from the film, the lighting design should be simple yet bright enough to illuminate both the Conductor and the Hero Boy. The use of professional lighting is strongly recommended to help enhance the scene. If the lighting used to illuminate the boarding platform can be dimmed, doing so just prior to the beginning of the prologue in conjunction with raising the area lighting for the scene will naturally draw passengers' eyes to the presentation. At a minimum, flood lights should be used to illuminate the area where the presentation will occur. For further information regarding lighting design at the depot and boarding area see (SECTION 5: Depot and Boarding Area).

Sound Design: As the Hero Boy walks toward the massive locomotive that powers THE POLAR EXPRESS™ the sound of mechanical groans, hisses, and squeals of steel and steam provide a surreal and mysterious environment. Incorporating these sound effects within the presentation of the prologue as well as ambient noises of the train at the boarding area can create an atmosphere very similar to that of the film.

In addition to these design elements, each portion of the dialogue must be clearly audible throughout the boarding area. Each host must provide at least one (1) microphone to be used for presentation of the prologue. While not required, it is recommended that the Conductor and Hero Boy each utilize their own dedicated wireless lavalier type microphone to keep their hands free. This allows the characters to interact with various props such as the Conductor's lantern and the clipboard with the Hero Boy's information.

Creative use of the scored music from the film is the final component of the sound design. After the Conductor has invited each passenger to board the train, music from THE POLAR EXPRESS™ soundtrack should be heard both at the boarding area and on board the train. At a minimum the overture from "Suite From the Polar Express" by Alan Silvestri must be heard upon conclusion of the scene. Additional non-branded Christmas music may be utilized after completion of this track to fill the time between completion of boarding and departure of the train. For further information regarding sound design at the depot and boarding area see (SECTION 5: Depot and Boarding Area).

Note: Variations due to differing logistical challenges posed by individual hosts are certainly understood by Rail Events Inc. Any changes to an individual presentation of the event from these guidelines must be submitted and approved by Rail Events Inc. as a part of an approved THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Event Plan, a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the start of the event. A completed and approved event plan is essential in the development of a well-executed event and is a requirement of Rail Events Inc.

Prologue Fundamentals

- ➔ An adaptation of the dialogue from the film's boarding scene is required within this prologue
- ➔ The presentation should take place on an elevated platform adjacent to the train at the boarding platform and must include the Conductor and Hero Boy
- ➔ Every effort must be made to ensure that the scene be performed live
- ➔ The conveyed dialogue should match that of the exchange between the Conductor and Hero Boy as close as possible
- ➔ Building upon the film's dialogue, the Conductor's performance should work to excite the crowd
- ➔ At a minimum, flood lights should be used to illuminate the area where the presentation will occur
- ➔ Each portion of the dialogue must be clearly audible throughout the boarding area
- ➔ Each host must provide at least one (1) microphone to be used for presentation of the prologue
- ➔ After the Conductor has invited each passenger to board the train, music from THE POLAR EXPRESS™ soundtrack should be heard both at the boarding area and on board the train

Section 13 Ticket Sales, Reservations, and Pricing

Overview: Host railroads are responsible for selling tickets or contracting with an outside ticket vendor. For in-house ticketing this will include supplying ticket stock and establishing a procedure for procuring advance reservations. Suggested and minimum ticket pricing should be discussed with a Rail Events Inc. representative before a host venue establishes sales and budget plans. Children age two and over will require a ticket to the event. At the discretion of each host, children under the age of two (2) may not require a ticket.

Assigned Seating: Assigning seat numbers at the time of purchase is highly recommended. Assigning seats allows passengers to be seated together or nearby within the same reservation. Providing each passenger with a printed ticket with their coach name or number, and seat number will speed up the boarding process and eliminate confusion as to where to be seated.

Ticket and Information Delivery: Tickets purchased via advance reservations may be emailed or mailed to the customer, or picked up on site. Emailing or mailing the tickets gives hosts the opportunity to distribute information in advance about the event and venue such as driving route suggestions, public transportation options, parking instructions, or boarding details.

Ticket Sales, Reservations and Pricing Fundamentals

- ➔ Host railroads are responsible for selling tickets or contracting with an outside ticket vendor
- ➔ At the discretion of each host, children under the age of two may not require a ticket
- ➔ Providing each passenger with a printed ticket with their coach name or number, and seat number will speed up the boarding process and eliminate confusion as to where to be seated

Section 14 Retail Products, Premiums, and Event Accessories

Overview: Rail Events Inc. offers a variety of Retail Products, Premiums and Event Accessories to enhance THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. The gift shop and retail area must consist of a variety of branded THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride products for sale. Each year, Rail Events Inc. will send out an updated catalog or catalogs listing all Retail Products, Premiums and Event Accessories available for host venue purchase. Event Accessories and Premiums, including but not limited to the First Class Mugs and First Class Shopping Bags must not be sold as retail products.

Retail Products: THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Retail Products are required at each event. A variety of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Retail Products are available through Rail Events Inc., and those products are specific to the event. Hosts must follow the ordering deadline requirements to ensure enough production of desired products during the year. Host railroads may order whatever quantity of product that is appropriate for their event size. While it is acceptable to feature other THE POLAR EXPRESS™ products from approved licensed vendors as well as non-branded products, retail products specific to THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride are preferred. It is also acceptable, but not encouraged, to sell general non-branded holiday product.

Premiums: Rail Events Inc. offers several Premiums that are required onboard THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride. Premiums, including without limitation, give-away Silver Bells, ceramic First Class Hot Chocolate Mugs if First Class service is offered, and Tumblers if Deluxe Class is offered will be utilized at the event provided that such Premiums must be licensed product purchased from Rail Events Inc. Hosts must purchase and use the Silver Bell from Rail Events Inc. to ensure brand consistency and quality. The Silver Bells are engraved with THE POLAR EXPRESS™. Additionally, if First Class service is offered at the event First Class Mugs must be purchased. Each year Rail Events Inc. designs a new First Class Mug unique for that season. These mugs often become collector items for many families. It is highly recommended that the host use First Class Shopping Bags in conjunction with the use of First Class Mugs. Extra Premiums may be used the following year on board the train but must never be sold as a retail product. No non-licensed product for Silver Bells, First Class Mugs, First Class Shopping Bags or Tumblers will be allowed in conjunction with the event.

Event Accessories: Rail Events Inc. offers a variety of Event Accessories that are available for purchase. Each host will be required to utilize Event Accessories as sourced through Rail Events Inc. Event Accessories consist of event support items including, but not limited to, branded Hot Chocolate cups and lids, First Class branded napkins, branded conductor hat emblems (badges) and lapel pins, and other items related to the event experience and brand support. Any exceptions to the use of the Event Accessories will be upon prior approval by Rail Events Inc. Extra Event Accessories may be used the following year on board the train but must never be sold as a retail product. For further information regarding Event Accessories and how they may be integrated into the presentation see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Important Ordering Information: It is important that the host order all Retail Products, Premiums, and Event Accessories within the timeline allotted by Rail Events Inc. Failure to do so may result in the host receiving alternate products. Orders are placed during the first quarter of each event year. Product supply may be limited for new hosts signing agreements in the same year as the event takes place.

Venue: It is important that the retail space be conveniently located and accessible to all guests before and after their train trip. Locating the store in or near the path of egress from the event can help with overall sales as all passengers are directed through or near the store upon their exit. The retail area should be a clean, presentable, indoor or other covered space which is able to accommodate an appropriate number of passengers concurrently. Hosts are always welcomed to use their own gift shops, or install additional tents, or satellite retail kiosks.

Décor: The retail area must be decorated with THE POLAR EXPRESS™ template décor. Christmas trees with THE POLAR EXPRESS™ branded ornaments are an attractive way to display product. Additional decoration such as soft white Christmas lights, green garland, wrapped gifts, stockings, and Christmas ribbons give the area a classic Christmas feel that represents the imagery in the film.

Staffing: It is important to staff the retail area with an appropriate number of staff members to accommodate for the capacity of the event. In addition, all staff members should be dressed in appropriate attire to match the theme and feel of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride event. For further information regarding staffing see (SECTION 10: Event Staffing). For further information regarding staff attire see (SECTION 8: Costuming).

Retail Products, Premiums and Event Accessories Fundamentals

- ➔ Event Accessories and Premiums, including but not limited to the First Class Mugs and First Class Shopping Bags must not be sold as retail products
- ➔ THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride Retail Products are required at each event
- ➔ Hosts must purchase and use the Silver Bell from Rail Events Inc. to ensure brand consistency and quality
- ➔ If hosts offer First Class service at their event they must purchase the First Class Mug
- ➔ Required items include, but are not limited to, branded cups and Golden Tickets
- ➔ It is important that the host order all Retail Products, Premiums, and Event Accessories within the timeline allotted by Rail Events Inc.
- ➔ The retail area should be a clean, presentable, indoor or other covered space which is able to accommodate a large amount of passengers concurrently
- ➔ The retail area must be decorated with THE POLAR EXPRESS™ template décor
- ➔ It is important to staff the retail area with an appropriate number of staff members to accommodate for the capacity of the event

Section 15 Signage

Overview: All event signage is the responsibility of the host railroad and must be on THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded templates. Hand written signs are not acceptable and must not be used. Host venues will receive a collateral guide in digital form, which includes artwork and templates for event signage.

All signage should be affixed in a professional manner. If tape of any kind is to be used, it must be concealed in an aesthetically pleasing manner that does not cover the exterior of the sign in any way.

Required Signage: The following signs are required if applicable, and it is suggested that any other similar areas are clearly marked.

- Ticketing
- Boarding Locations
- Restrooms
- Retail
- Entrances and Exits
- Parking
- Shuttle Bus Stops
- Loading and Unloading Locations
- Trash or Recycle
- Stroller Parking

Signage Fundamentals

- ➔ All event signage is the responsibility of the host railroad and must be on THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride branded templates
- ➔ Hand written signs are not acceptable and must not be used
- ➔ All signage should be affixed in a professional manner. If tape of any kind is to be used, it must be concealed in an aesthetically pleasing manner that does not cover the exterior of the sign in any way

Section 16 Photography

Overview: Host venues will have the opportunity to offer professional photography as part of their sales program. Rail Events Inc. will provide template artwork that can be printed as backdrops, or the host venue can chose to create their own scene, incorporating characters such as the Conductor or Hobo. Santa or his Elves must not be used for photography before they are revealed at the North Pole. If photography with Santa and his Elves is to be offered upon the train's return to the depot or boarding area, a secluded location should be chosen to prevent those passengers waiting for subsequent departures from viewing these characters. For the consideration of time constraints and immersion into the story, it is recommended that all professional photography take place off the train.

Legal Requirements: The photographer must be in compliance with any and all local, state, federal, or other governing agencies and regulations with jurisdiction over that area. There are specific rules regarding privacy and commercial uses of images which the host must be sure are observed by the photographer and photography vendor.

Photography Fundamentals

- ➔ If photography with Santa and his Elves is to be offered upon the train's return to the depot or boarding area, a secluded location should be chosen to prevent those passengers waiting for subsequent departures from viewing these characters

Section 17 Marketing

Overview: To assist hosts in their marketing efforts, Rail Events Inc. will provide each host venue with a digital package of approved marketing collateral templates to be used in executing regional marketing initiatives. These marketing collateral templates will be provided in Adobe Illustrator (.ai) or Adobe Photoshop (.psd) formats and will offer designated spaces to insert information and graphics specific for each venue.

Materials: Templates will be provided via digital download and will include various items for the following applications:

- Event Décor Templates
- Outdoor Ad Templates
- Web Ad Templates
- Social Media Ad Templates
- Print Ad Templates
- Broadcast Ad Templates

Execution: Host venues are required to utilize a qualified in-house or contracted graphic designer to edit the designated areas of the marketing collateral templates. Broadcast video or audio templates will require a qualified digital film or audio editor to customize the spots for television or radio distribution. Television and radio stations will often offer editing services for advertising clients. Check with your local affiliate to see if these services are available in your market area.

Any materials that mention THE POLAR EXPRESS™ even in text alone will require the following legal notice in fine print exactly as it appears below:

THE POLAR EXPRESS and all related characters and elements © & ™ Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. (sXX)

Note: The XX in (sXX) should represent the year the materials are released. This should read (s18) for materials released in 2018, (s19) for 2019, and so on.

Approvals: Each completed marketing collateral template must be submitted to Rail Events Inc. for review and approval before being released to the public. All templates and advertising must be approved prior to release. Each host must use templates exactly as instructed. Graphics and placement within the template should not be adjusted without prior approval of Rail Events Inc. and Warner Bros. Changes to these templates or custom artwork may be approved, but will need to be submitted and approved through the Warner Bros. Brand Assurance system. Initial review and subsequent revision reviews can take up to ten (10) business days each. Contact your Rail Events Inc. representative to discuss any custom marketing initiatives before beginning this process.

Marketing Fundamentals

- ➔ Rail Events Inc. will provide each host venue with a digital package of approved marketing collateral templates to be used in executing regional marketing initiatives
- ➔ Each completed marketing collateral template must be submitted to Rail Events Inc. for review and approval before being released to the public
- ➔ Contact your Rail Events Inc. representative to discuss any custom marketing initiatives before beginning this process

Section 18 Public Relations

Overview: Due to the popularity of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride and its importance in local communities, many developments related to the event are newsworthy and may be picked up by local media outlets. Depending on the circumstances, news coverage may be positive or negative in nature. Hosts should forward any external news coverage concerning their event via email to their Rail Events Inc. representative.

Notification and Statements: In the event of any potentially newsworthy occurrence, hosts are required to notify Rail Events Inc. immediately. Potentially newsworthy occurrences may include but are not limited to the following:

- Passenger, crew, or cast injuries during the event
- Unexpected equipment failure causing cancellation of an event(s) which might result in negative public relations and unhappy passengers
- Train incidents or derailment whether or not there are any injuries
- Extreme weather or natural disasters which may affect events
- Disgruntled passengers who have threatened to contact media outlets
- Accusations of discrimination based on race, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- Any other situations that pertain to public safety and the well-being of passengers and staff
- Any situation that may, for any reason, negatively impact the image and greater goodwill of THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride

Under these and similar circumstances, any statements both verbal and written issued to the press must be reviewed and approved by Rail Events Inc. and Warner Bros. Consumer Products prior to release. Once approved, local event managers and staff should be briefed on approved talking points in the event that they are asked questions by passengers or members of the media.

Public Relations Fundamentals

- ➔ In the event of a potentially newsworthy occurrence, hosts are required to notify Rail Events Inc. immediately
- ➔ Any statements both verbal and written issued to the press must be reviewed and approved by Rail Events Inc. and Warner Bros. Consumer Products prior to release