

NORTH COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

330 S. Main Avenue • Fallbrook, California 92028-2938 • Phone: (760) 723-2005 • Fax: (760) 723-2072 • Web: www.ncfire.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CINDY ACOSTA
JEFFERY EGKAN
DAVID KENNEDY
KENNETH E. MUNSON
JOHN VAN DOORN

STEPHEN J. ABBOTT- Fire Chief/CEO - sabbott@ncfire.org
ROBERT H. JAMES - District Counsel - roberthjameslaw@gmail.com
LOREN A. STEPHEN-PORTER - Executive Assistant/Board Secretary - lstephen@ncfire.org

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: STEPHEN ABBOTT, FIRE CHIEF/CEO
SUBJECT: BOARD MEETING PACKAGE
DATE: MARCH 9, 2021

Enclosed is your Board package for the Special March Board Meeting. We have tried to include the information you will need to effectively consider and act on agenda items.

DUE TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK AND PURSUANT TO THE DECLARATIONS BY GOVERNOR NEWSOME AND THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, ALL BOARD MEETINGS WILL BE TELEPHONIC ONLY.

The Board, Staff and Public may participate by using the following information:

Audio-only: Call: 1-408-419-1715 or 1-408-419-6290. Meeting ID: 834 677 344, followed by #.

Visual/Audio: <https://bluejeans.com/834677344>.

Board documents are online at:

<https://www.ncfire.org/2021-03-09-board-special-board-meeting-march-9-2021-at-5-00-p-m-telephonic>.

Please note this month's meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 9, 2021, beginning at **5:00 p.m.**

It is our goal to be prepared to respond accurately to Board questions and concerns. You can help us achieve this goal by contacting me prior to the Board meeting with your questions and concerns. This will allow time for the Staff and me to provide the appropriate information for review at the Board meeting.

To ensure a quorum is present, please call Loren in advance of the meeting if you will be unable to attend. She may be reached at (760) 723-2012.

Respectfully,



Stephen Abbott
Fire Chief/CEO



PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF FALLBROOK, BONSALE AND RAINBOW

DUTY ~ INTEGRITY ~ RESPECT



NORTH COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

AGENDA FOR SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

MARCH 9, 2021 - 5:00 p.m.

DUE TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK AND PURSUANT TO THE DECLARATIONS BY GOVERNOR NEWSOME AND THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE ALL BOARD MEETINGS WILL BE TELEPHONIC ONLY.

The Staff and Public may participate in the open session portion of the meeting by using the following information:

Audio-only: Call: 1-408-419-1715 or 1-408-419-6290. Meeting ID: 834 677 344, followed by #.

Visual/Audio: <https://bluejeans.com/834677344?src=calendarLink>

Board Agenda is online at: <https://www.ncfire.org/2021-03-09-board-special-board-meeting-march-9-2021-at-5-00-p-m-telephonic>

PUBLIC ACTIVITIES AGENDA

We invite you to stay for the remainder of the business meeting, however, please feel free to depart at the close of the Public Activities Agenda.

- CALL TO ORDER**
- ROLL CALL**
- MOMENT OF SILENCE**
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

1. PUBLIC COMMENT — PRESIDENT VAN DOORN

(pgs.1-2)

- *STANDING ITEM: Members of the Public may directly address the Board of Directors on items of interest to the Public provided no action will be taken on non-agenda items. The Board President may limit comments to three minutes per speaker (Board of Directors Operations – Elections, Officers and Terms SOG § 4.2.6.3.).*

ACTION AGENDA

All Events listed under the Action Agenda will be presented and discussed prior to the Board taking action on any matter. Time Certain Events will commence precisely at the time announced in the Agenda.

2. REVIEW AND CONSIDER FIRE CHIEF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS — CHIEF ABBOTT

(pgs. 3-14)

- *Review process to initiate recruitment process, scope of candidate pool, approve Fire Chief/CEO job description and provide direction on process.*

STANDING DISCUSSION EVENTS: *All Events listed under the Standing Discussion Events are presented every meeting.*

● COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

(pgs. 15-16)

● STAFF:

- Chief Abbott
- Other Staff

● BOARD

● BARGAINING GROUPS

● PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is: Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 4:00 p.m. - Telephonic.

CERTIFICATION OF AGENDA POSTING

I certify that this Agenda was posted in accordance with the provisions of the Government Code § 54950 et. seq. The posting locations were: [1] the entrance of North County Fire Protection District Administrative Offices, [2] Fallbrook Public Utility District Administrative Offices and [3] the Roy Noon Meeting Hall; [4] District's website at <http://www.ncfire.org>. The Agenda was also available for review at the Office of the Board Secretary, located at located at 330 S. Main Avenue, Fallbrook (760) 723-2012. Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the District after distribution of the agenda packet, are available for public inspection in the Office of the Board Secretary, located at 330 S. Main Avenue, Fallbrook (760) 723-2012, during normal business hours or may be found on the District website at <http://www.ncfire.org>, subject to the Staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting. The date of posting was March 4, 2021."

Board Secretary Loren Stephen-Porter:

Date:

March 4, 2021

Note: The Americans with Disabilities Act provides that no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, District business. If you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the District Office 72 hours prior to the meeting at (760) 723-2012.



**NORTH COUNTY FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT
FIRE CHIEF/CEO**

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: STEPHEN ABBOTT, FIRE CHIEF/CEO
DATE: MARCH 9, 2021
SUBJECT: PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- 1. Members of the Public may directly address the Board of Directors on items of interest to the Public provided no action will be taken on non-agenda items. The Board President may limit comments to three minutes per speaker (Board of Directors Operations – Elections, Officers and Terms SOG § 4.2.6.3.).*

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**NORTH COUNTY FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT
FIRE CHIEF/CEO**

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: CHIEF ABBOTT
DATE: MARCH 9, 2021
SUBJECT: FIRE CHIEF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

ACTION AGENDA

RECOMMENDATION:

- To initiate the recruitment and selection process for the next Fire Chief/CEO.
- To determine the scope of the candidate pool (internal vs. external).
- To review and approve the modified Fire Chief/CEO job description.
- To provide direction on the recruitment and selection process.

BACKGROUND:

The current Fire Chief will be retiring July 31st, 2021. Managing such a transition typically takes 3-5 months when taking into consideration the steps necessary for a successful transition, which includes (1) recruitment & selection, (2) subordinate promotional examinations, (3) onboarding and mentoring of new Chief Officers, (4) transition and redistribution of responsibilities among staff (as appropriate) and (5) a supervised glidepath. It is therefore necessary to initiate that process at this time.

DISCUSSION:

There are several components to this process for the Board to consider. As requested during the February Board Meeting, a summary of the Fire Chief's major duties and responsibilities, as well as attendant knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) has been included for review (Attachment A). From this the Fire Chief/CEO job description has been updated for consideration (Attachment B). A copy of the most recent Strategic Direction report has also been included (Attachment C), presuming that the Fire Chief's initial major tasks will include those outlined in that document.

The Board will first need to determine if the qualities outlined in the KSAs & job description are in alignment with the District's Strategic Direction and modify accordingly. This may be accomplished by the whole of the Board if it is generally in alignment or alternatively, via ad hoc committee if it is anticipated substantial discussion/modification is necessary.

Once the Board has a clear understanding of what it wishes to accomplish during the tenure of the next Fire Chief/CEO, it will need to determine next if sufficient candidates within the organization exist. In the professional opinion of the Fire Chief, there are two internal candidates that, with the proper support, have the qualities necessary to be successful in this position. Likewise, there are sufficient qualified internal candidates to fill subsequent subordinate positions created through a promotion from within for Fire Chief/CEO.

The route that the Board chooses to consider (internal vs. external recruitment) will determine the timing and scope of the recruitment and selection process. As with the review of KSAs & job description, the Board may accomplish this via the whole of the Board, an ad hoc committee or delegate to Staff. For a competitive process, typically such recruitments consist of a written application with cover letter & resume, an interview panel comprised of Fire Chiefs from within the region and culminating with an interview by the Board of Directors.

Staff is currently working on a succession and transition plan. In order to provide sufficient time for an orderly transition, it is desirable for the Fire Chief/CEO selection to be completed by the end of May.

FISCAL IMPACT:

As executive compensation is a matter of public concern, the recommended starting annual salary for this position would be \$185,000. This is consistent with the District's past practice of a 15% separation between ranks (Division Chief's salary is \$161,000) and is also 5% less than the current "regular pay step" of the Fire Chief/CEO (\$194,000), which is typically the pay adjustment for individuals that have successfully completed a probationary period.

SUMMARY:

The District possesses sufficient talent within the organization and sufficient organizational direction to recruit from within for the position of Fire Chief/CEO. Initiating this process now will allow for sufficient time to implement an orderly transition of the new Management Team.



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FIRE CHIEF/CEO

1.0. **PURPOSE:**

- 1.1. To provide a description of the physical requirements for, the qualifications for and the duties and responsibilities of employment within this classification with the North County Fire Protection District.

2.0. **POLICY:**

- 2.1. All members classified in the position described herein shall meet all physical requirements, personal and professional qualifications; he/she shall perform the stated duties and responsibilities and all other duties as assigned.

3.0. **INTENT:**

- 3.1. The intent of this Policy is to provide an overview of the abilities necessary to appropriately function within the specified classification. It is also the intent to provide an overview of the typical duties and responsibilities of the stated position. This job analysis is not intended to delineate every facet of a particular job classification; other duties and responsibilities may be assigned as appropriate.

4.0. **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS JOB ANALYSIS:**

JOB TITLE: Fire Chief/CEO

EMPLOYER: North County Fire Protection District
330 S. Main Avenue
Fallbrook, CA 92028-2938
Phone: (760) 723-2012; Fax (760) 723-2072

UPDATES: September 6, 2002 (residency requirement, resulting from NCFPD Board Action on 07-01-02);
June 7, 2005, (residency requirement changed, resulting from Board Action on June 7, 2005).
August 11, 2015 (updated MQs), March 9, 2021 (updated KSA's).

4.1. **GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION:**

Subject to policy and administrative direction of the Board of Directors, the Fire Chief/CEO plans, organizes and directs the overall operation and activity of the Department. The Fire Chief/CEO is subject to call-out for major incidents.



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FIRE CHIEF/CEO

4.2. WORK HOURS:

The Fire Chief/CEO works a forty (40) hour-per-week work schedule. Office or Administrative hours average forty (40) hours-per-week. Regular administrative duties, along with responses to incidents, are generally performed between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Board meetings, community meetings, special or educational programs and other events may require travel and additional hours in the evening and/or on weekends. This is an exempt position. During "regular work hours," employees are permitted two, fifteen (15) minute breaks; a sixty (60) minute lunch break is provided.

5.0. EDUCATION:

- 5.1. Bachelor's degree in fire administration, emergency management, public administration, business administration, leadership or similar major from a regionally accredited college or university is required.
- 5.2. A graduate degree is preferred.
- 5.3. Ongoing continuing professional education is required.

6.0. EXPERIENCE/CREDENTIALS:

6.1. EXPERIENCE:

- 6.1.1. FIRE SERVICE EXPERIENCE: A minimum of fifteen (15) years of total fire service experience is required.
 - 6.1.1.1. A minimum of five (5) years as a Chief Officer (Battalion Chief or higher) including at least ~~three (3)~~two (2) years as Division Chief or higher (Deputy or Assistant Chief).
 - 6.1.1.2. Service as a Fire Chief with a California special district fire department of similar size, serving a similar community, with a similar risk profile, providing a similar range of services (including ALS engines and ALS transport) is highly desirable.
 - 6.1.1.3. Specific experience in a suburban fire department with a significant wildland/urban interface component is highly desirable.



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FIRE CHIEF/CEO

6.2. CREDENTIALS/CERTIFICATIONS:

- 6.2.1. Must have a California Driver's License or be eligible to obtain the same (also must be and remain insurable with District's liability carrier).
- 6.2.2. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation certification (BLS - CPR/AED) is required.
- 6.2.3. Certification as a Chief Officer by the California Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is required. OSFM certification as a Fire Chief is preferred. Candidates from outside California may submit other certifications/documentation/justification demonstrating equivalency with this requirement.
- 6.2.4. Completion of or current enrollment in, the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program at the National Fire Academy or the Executive Chief Fire Officer (NFPA Fire Officer IV) through the California State Fire Marshal or equivalent certifying authority is required.
- 6.2.5. Chief Fire Officer Designation (CFOD) issued by the Commission on Public Safety Excellence or Fire Chief Designation through the California State Fire Marshal is preferred. CFOD will also be recognized as equivalent to OSFM Chief Officer or Fire Chief Certification for out of state candidates (see above). If not held at hiring, this designation must be achieved within one (1) year of date of hire.

7.0. OTHER KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS/ABILITIES:

- 7.1. Demonstrated track record of positive and constructive labor relations is required, being sensitive to the emotional needs of others and flexible in decision-making, and yet being capable of making difficult, unpopular decisions.
- 7.2. A demonstrated track record of community engagement, including membership/participation in civic/service organizations in the community and regular, ongoing involvement with public/community events outside the fire department, while maintaining an apolitical stance.
- 7.3. Demonstrated track record of membership and impactful participation in local and/or regional professional organizations. ~~such as the International Association~~

LAST REVIEW: 06-29-15
LAST UPDATE: 06-29-15
FC/BOD APPROVAL: 08-11-15
TRACKER: [225.08](#)

L/M Review: n/a



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FIRE CHIEF/CEO

of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the California Fire Chiefs Association (CalCHIEFS) or similar organizations.

- 7.4. Think strategically and develop, communicate, and implement organizational vision, seeing projects through to completion and within current fiscal resources.
- 7.5. Function as a broad-level fire protection subject matter expert, being able to provide professional guidance on a wide range of fire and EMS related matters, continually pursuing professional development.
- 7.6. Mentor and develop subordinates, delegate authority and hold others accountable at all levels while maintaining a team environment.
- 7.7. Seek out opportunities to improve organizational capabilities and fiscal position, managing multiple, complex assignments simultaneously, keeping stakeholders apprised of organizational momentum.
- 8.0. **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT:** Residence within thirty (30) minute typical drive-time of the District Administrative Offices is required; must commit to achieve these requirements within six (6) months of hire. Residence within the boundaries of the District is preferred.

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Attachment A
Fire Chief/CEO Duties and Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES:

<u>Organizational Direction:</u>	<u>Risk Management:</u>	<u>Representation:</u>	<u>Business Management:</u>
Organizational vision/direction	Personnel health & mental wellbeing	Labor/Management relations	Contract & RFP review
Staff development	Workplace safety considerations/priorities	Board education & relations	Grant writing & review
Succession planning	Major events & significant event planning	County Chiefs & Districts	Policy interpretation, review and approval
Business strategy	Contingency plan (recession)	Zone section representation	Legal matters & support
Facilities replacement plan	Auto aid/mutual aid support	Regional/Statewide committees	Work comp claims/settlements
Shared overhead/consolidation	New development (residential/commercial)	Community relations	Contract negotiations
FRHD JPA	Disciplinary decisions	Legislative advocacy	Board packet review
Personal development	Non-disciplinary sensitive personnel matters	LAFCO	Fiscal analysis & forecasting
Promotional decisions	Code enforcement/appeal considerations	Cooperator relations	Budget preparation
		Intradepartmental communication & morale	Operational presence
		Media relations	

Demonstrated Ability To:

- Make difficult, unpopular decisions
- Put needs of the organization ahead of the individual
- Think strategically
- Develop, communicate and implement a vision
- Be flexible in decision-making
- Be sensitive to emotional needs of employees
- Manage multiple complex projects simultaneously
- Delegate authority/work as part of a team
- See projects through to completion
- Operate within current fiscal resources
- Hold others accountable at all levels
- Be politically astute but apolitical
- Function as a broad-level fire protection SME
- Continually pursue professional development
- Mentor and develop subordinates
- Lead organizational change
- See the big picture



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L/M Review: n/a



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L/M Review: n/a



**NORTH COUNTY FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT
FIRE CHIEF/CEO**

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: CHIEF ABBOTT
DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2021
SUBJECT: STRATEGIC DIRECTION DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION AGENDA

BACKGROUND:

Each year the District evaluates its present strategic direction and establishes goals and objectives to accomplish over the next 12-18 months. Much of what was identified in last year's strategic plan has been completed, most notably restructuring of Admin. and restoration of the 15th Firefighter position, execution of a Pension Obligation Bond, cessation of the Volunteer Firefighter Program, execution of a revenue study and adjustment of fees for service, and development of an alternative facilities replacement plan.

DISCUSSION:

Given that we have completed much of what has previously been identified as Board priorities over the years, much of what is presented herein is more long-range and therefore strategic in nature. While the District's present strategic plan is 15 years old, it would be recommended to hold off on a strategic plan at this time until: (1) leadership succession has been completed, (2) the COVID State of Emergency has ended or at least contained, and (3) a consultant has been identified to facilitate the process. Consequently, below is a synopsis of recommended priorities for this year and beyond; the corresponding spreadsheet provides a high-level overview of the associated cost-benefit with each objective. Items identified in green are readily attainable goals with sufficient funding, items in yellow are potentially attainable with sufficient funding, and items in red are unfunded yet important priorities.

1. **FINANCIAL PLANNING/MAINTENANCE OF RESERVE FUNDS:** For the last several years the District has been able to restore reserve funds through a combination of prudent spending control, availability of one-time year end "rollover funds," and use of the Fire Mitigation Fee (FMF) payback program, the latter of which allowed the District to "pay itself back" for prior FMF expenditures with future FMF funds. With the near exhaustion of that option and the reliance upon grant funding to support 50% of two full-time positions, it will be necessary to earmark other sources of *ongoing* revenue to ensure the District is able to maintain sufficient funds for existing positions and to repair/replace existing facilities.

As noted from last month's financial planning presentation, utilizing a cash basis or "pay as you go" methodology to fund capital expenditures provides substantial savings to the District and maintains a much more desirable fiscal trajectory. That same presentation also illustrated that while the District has achieved its recommended minimum reserve fund balance, it is quite sensitive to even a mild recession. The "recession stress test" model presented during the January meeting presumed a period of zero growth. For purposes of comparison, at the height of the Great Recession the District realized more than a 10% reduction in property tax revenue.

2. **FACILITIES:** The 2017 Facilities Condition Assessment (aka "Jorgensen Report"), which called for approximately \$1.3M annually to fully fund replacement of District facilities with new permanent buildings, caused the District to pursue a revenue measure (Prop. A). As a result of the failure of Prop A, last fall the District adjusted its fees for services and adopted a modified facilities replacement plan, which requires approximately \$700,000 in annual deposits to fund. Collectively the fee adjustments, once fully realized, should yield approximately 50% of what will be needed to fund this modified \$700,000 facility replacement plan and relies largely upon continuing to expand our single-role EMS delivery model.

The facility replacement plan is based upon the concept of using metal buildings for the apparatus, utility, and storage components of the facilities, and should address many of the employee health and safety as well as customer-service related shortcomings noted in the Jorgensen Report. Presently the District is poised to execute a sole-source contract for the replacement of the Station 3 modular living quarters, which will likely be followed by a separate RFP to address deferred maintenance of the apparatus building.

Additionally, it would also be highly recommended to engage an architect and civil engineer now to develop building and engineering plans for Station 4, in the event that another Federal stimulus package arises, a key requirement of which is to have a "shovel ready" project. This is also necessary as the permitting and planning process typically takes 2-3 years and will assist with future planning and budgeting, as use of metal buildings for fire stations locally is a relatively new concept.

3. **SUCCESSION PLANNING:** This past year the District successfully reorganized Administration in order to adjust for the retirement of our Administrative Deputy Chief and restore the 15th Firefighter position in Rainbow. Between late May and early August, the Fire Chief will be retiring, and it will be necessary to initiate that replacement process. This will allow the District sufficient time to develop and implement a replacement and succession plan. This selection is at the pleasure of the Board; it is recommended to fill for this position internally. Should the Board opt to recruit from within, to provide sufficient leadership support for the new Chief it is recommended that we reclassify the remaining current Division Chief to Deputy Chief. Senior staff is presently in the process of mentoring subordinates to take on new and additional responsibilities.

4. **INTEGRATION WITH NORTH ZONE AGENCIES:** Over the past year substantial progress has been achieved with zone integration, particularly in the areas of strategic planning, promotional testing, and community paramedicine (Operation Collaboration-COVID immunizations). Integration was accelerated with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the coming year it is likely this will spur additional changes, primarily in the EMS arena. Some of these include development of a BLS overlay, potential sharing of overhead, and implementation of call triage and priority medical dispatch.

5. **LONG-TERM FISCAL ADVOCACY:** At the last Board meeting it was requested to evaluate alternative options to augment facility funding. Over the past 5 years the District has implemented substantial restructuring, cost-containment, and revenue enhancement strategies, retained a consultant to explore additional revenue options, and pursued a revenue measure (Prop A). While not exhausted, future opportunities will require substantial political engagement and legislative advocacy at the local and State level and include: (1) measures to adjust the voter approval threshold for infrastructure projects, (2) support for a local voter-led funding initiative, (3) advocate for safe and smart growth & development, (4) restoration of funds lost through ERAF.

6. **COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION:** Staff is currently developing a continuity of operation plan (COOP), which has been delayed due to the impacts of COVID and a protracted fire season. The District is currently evaluating its relationship with CERT and may be exploring other opportunities to enhance community risk reduction, such as through development of a Fire Corps program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Discussion item; fiscal impact would depend upon specific action steps determined by the Board for each area of focus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Does the Board concur with these strategic priorities and vision to address them?
2. Does the Board wish to pursue any additional initiatives now or in the immediate future?
3. Does the Board require any additional information on any of these topics, or related topics?



**NORTH COUNTY FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT
FIRE CHIEF/CEO**

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: STEPHEN ABBOTT, FIRE CHIEF/CEO
DATE: MARCH 9, 2021
SUBJECT: COMMENTS, REPORTS AND UPDATES

● **STAFF COMMENTS/REPORTS/UPDATES:**

● **STEPHEN ABBOTT, FIRE CHIEF/CEO:**

● **CHIEF OFFICERS & STAFF:**

● **BOARD:**

● **BARGAINING GROUPS:**

● **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

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