

From: [David Becker](#)
To: [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Spotery System - Tennis Community Frustration
Date: Sunday, October 23, 2022 6:14:31 PM
Attachments: [Conflicts due to Reservation System.pdf](#)
[Dolores Park Tennis Courts - San Francisco Rec & Park.pdf](#)
[Misleading Spotery Survey.pdf](#)
[Reservation System - Email 6192020.pdf](#)
[Reservation System - Email 6182020.pdf](#)
[Constant Spotery Rule Violations.pdf](#)
[Reservation System - Email 7102020.pdf](#)
[Reservation System - Email 9242020.pdf](#)
[Spotery as a temporary solution.pdf](#)
[Spotery costs and background.pdf](#)
[Banning users from using public tennis courts.pdf](#)

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Supervisor Peskin,
Board of Supervisors,

The Spotery reservation system has been a major point of frustration for myself and the tennis community. The parks department implemented it without any due process. There were no community meetings. No questions. No discussions. They used COVID as a justification for the safest sport for airborne viral transmission. This was sold as a temporary solution for a non-existing problem.

Before Spotery, on any day of the week, you could go to one of many parks in San Francisco. You would wait 20-30 minutes for your turn and then play. There were no issues, no conflicts, and all courts were always in use.

Spotery has caused more conflicts, inefficiencies, and abuse than I've ever experienced on a tennis court.

- We are now seeing "reservation only" courts sit empty for hours with a line of people waiting for the small number of remaining "walk-up" courts.
- We see users reserving with 2-3 accounts for 3-hour sessions blocking the entire park from using the courts.
- We see instructors abusing the system by having their students book for them.
- Doubles partners where 3 people book courts for an entire morning.
- Users with reservations have been rude and aggressive when they arrive 15 minutes late and a "walk-up" tennis player who had been patiently waiting in line takes over the court (as is the rule)
- Providing feedback of misuse is frustrating as well. The Parks Department will ban the account of the user without any due process. It is a huge problem. It's an empty gesture since anyone can create another account free of charge. It's a waste of time. Most users have 2-3 accounts on Spotery.

When looking to justify expanding the reservation system, the parks department sent a Spotery survey to Spotery users. This is akin to asking the choir in a church if they think the church is a good idea. Only 3 of my 15 tennis partners had received this survey. Not only did the parks

department put their fingers on the scale by sending it only to Spotery users, but they asked required questions that would force users to answer that they "wanted" to have the reservation system (see below).

For decades this has been a non-issue. A tennis player comes to any court, they wait for their turn. The rules are spelled out. No one had to wait more than 20-30 minutes. The number of walk-up courts in the city have been cut in half because of this reservation system. The wait times are so long, my friends and I are forced to drive to Marin just to play tennis.

Please see some sample correspondence with the parks department. It has been extremely frustrating from the very beginning.

- Dolores Park Tennis Courts - San Francisco Rec & Park
- Banning users from using public tennis courts
- Conflicts due to Reservation System
- Constant Spotery Rule Violations
- Misleading Spotery Survey:
 - Specifically, **Option #1, where the only options are to keep the reservation system, increase it, or "don't care"**
- Reservation System - Email 6/18/2020
- Reservation System - Email 6/19/2020
- Reservation System - Email 7/10/2020
- Reservation System - Email 9/24/2020
- Spotery as a temporary solution
- Spotery costs and background

SF Rec & Park - Spotery Reservations

Yuriy Dybskiy <yuriy@dybskiy.com>

Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 2:39 PM

To: David Becker <beckerd@gmail.com>

Cc: "Hing, Jessica (REC)" <jessica.hing@sfgov.org>, Phil Ginsberg <phil.ginsburg@sfgov.org>, "Angulo, Sunny (BOS)" <sunny.angulo@sfgov.org>, julie@tenniscoalitionsf.org

Hi folks,

We had a pretty strange experience at Dolores Park tennis courts yesterday:

As we were waiting in line we noticed a group of doubles move from court 2 to court 3 and went on to play another 1.5 hours.

I asked if they had a reservation and if they lived together.

They said they made two of them and so can we if we do it a week in advance at 9am (which I believe violates the rules).

And that they don't live together (which violates covid requirements).

They ignored our ask to let people who are waiting play and then flipped us off as they were leaving.

My friend told me he sees them doublebook pretty frequently.

Their reservations were Sunday 3pm court 2 and 4:30pm court 3.

What's the right course of action in such a case?

Thank you.

[Quoted text hidden]

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Best regards,

Yuriy Dybskiy

Founder, CEO / [Puma Browser](#)

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June 18th, 2020

San Francisco Rec & Park Department
San Francisco Tennis Coalition

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
501 Stanyan St
San Francisco, CA 94117

Via email: <RPDinfo@sfgov.org>, <jessica.hing@sfgov.org>, <julie@tenniscoalitionsf.org>

SF Rec & Park Department and SF Tennis Coalition,

My name is David Becker, I am a member of the tennis community in San Francisco. I would like to voice my strong opposition to expanding the reservation system in Dolores Park.

Congregating between courts is a problem. It should be solved with markings on the ground highlighting where players should stand to wait.

This may seem trivial, but I want to highlight why this is important to tennis players who love Dolores Park and love the community we have built here.

There are two types of players that engage with the sport. Casual players who choose to play spontaneously and players with consistent weekly scheduled matches. Most players vacillate between the two.

The reservation system fits perfectly with weekly scheduled matches.

Since the courts are booked a week in advance, the system would eliminate Dolores park as an option for people wanting to just go out and hit. It would be a huge loss for the tennis community to eliminate Dolores Park as a place of spontaneous play.

In addition, most beginners come and wait for the courts. It would be a sad moment for San Francisco to miss out on residents summoning the motivation to try something new. As a member of the tennis community I will miss out on evenings of meeting new friends and knowing that even on a bad day, we can grab a racquet and head to play.

This is an unprecedented time, and these decisions are not easy. I recognize this might be presented as a temporary fix for this moment. Most of us have lived long enough to see most temporary fixes become permanent due to the inertia of reverting policy.

Public safety is critical, and I strongly urge the Rec & Park Department to not solve this problem with forced reservations, where simple ground markings will do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'David Becker', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Becker

June 18th, 2020

cc:

General Manager, Phil Ginsburg Phil.Ginsburg@sfgov.org
Superintendent of Rec and Community Services, Lorraine Banford
Lorraine.Banford@sfgov.org
Director of Operations, Dennis Kern Dennis.kern@sfgov.org
Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Sarah Madland Sarah.madland@sfgov.org
Director of Property Management and Permits, Dana Ketcham
dana.ketcham@sfgov.org
District 8 Supervisor, Rafael Mandelman mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org



San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department

Free Online Tennis Court Reservation Feedback Survey

In the Spring of 2019, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department (SFRPD) launched a free pilot online reservation system for reserving a limited number of tennis courts (21 total courts in 11 parks throughout the city). The program has expanded and today SFRPD has 63 reservable courts at 25 parks and 62 walk-up courts at 43 parks. For more information on the implementation see background below.

Our records show you have either reserved courts or provided comments in the past. We are considering making modifications to the online reservation system and are seeking comments at this time. Please provide your feedback by completing the below survey.

Overall, do you support continuing the online reservation system? *

- Yes continue as is
- Yes but increase reservable courts
- Yes but decrease reservable courts
- No eliminate it

How often do you typically play using reserved courts? *

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Occasionally
- Not at all

How often do you typically play using walk-up courts? *

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Occasionally
- Not at all

We are considering a few options to modify the online reservation system. Please review and

comment on our proposed modifications below.

Option #1 - Increase Walk Up Courts: Do you support rolling the system back to increase the number of walk-up courts where there are multiple courts? *

- No change - Do not increase the number of walk-up courts
- Yes - Ensure at least one walk-up court at sites with 2 or more courts
- Yes - Ensure at least half of the courts are walk-up options
- I don't care

Option #2 - Change When You Can Book A Reservation: Do you support reducing the maximum number of days in advance you can book a reservation? *

- No change - Do not change the current policy of booking 7 days in advance
- Yes - Ensure some reservations can be made 7 days in advance and some 2 days in advance
- Yes - Make all reservations available for booking a maximum of 2 days in advance
- I don't care

Option #3 - Reduce Reservation Duration: Do you support reducing reservations from 1.5 hour to 1 hour of play? *

- No - Make all reservations 1.5 hours long
- Yes - Ensure reservation duration at some courts is 1.5 hours long and others 1 hour
- Yes - Make all reservations 1 hour long
- I don't care

Option #4 - Charge a modest fee (\$5-10) to discourage people from booking courts that they are not going to use and then they are not available to others. *

- I support a modest reservation fee
- No courts reservations should remain free
- I don't care

Email *

Zip Code *

Demographic *

- Under 18
- 18-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51 to 60
- Over 60

Decline to State

We know that there have been challenges with the Spotery reservation system and we are working to address them. Please provide additional feedback and concerns.

Background on the Free Online Tennis Reservation System

During Community Meetings held in 2018-19 regarding tennis in San Francisco the Recreation and Park Department (SFRPD) received community feedback that it would be helpful to offer reservations at tennis courts in the city instead of relying solely on walking up as it was very difficult to plan. Based on this feedback, in the Spring of 2019, SFRPD launched a free pilot online reservation system for reserving a limited number of tennis courts (21 total courts in 11 parks throughout the city).

SFRPD received positive feedback on the initial pilot and requests to expand it to include more sites and courts. SFRPD began exploring adding more courts with the goal of making reservable courts available citywide and increasing the number of bookable lighted courts for night play. Following a community meeting and outreach, in October 2019, RPD expanded the reservation system to 35 total courts in 23 parks.

In March 2020, all tennis courts were closed due to COVID-19. On June 6, tennis courts were allowed to reopen but the health department urged the department to institute systems to avoid crowding due to waiting in line. As a result, SFRPD proposed to add additional courts to the reservation system and made the final announcement to expand to additional courts in Summer 2020. As of today, SFRPD has 63 reservable courts at 25 parks and 62 walk-up courts at 43 parks.

See [our tennis directory here](#) for a list of reservable and walk-up courts. Our records show you have either reserved courts or provided comments in the past. We are considering making modifications to the online reservation system and are seeking comments at this time. Please provide your feedback by completing the below survey.

Thank you for participating!

Powered by  **formsite**

Submit

Reservation System in Dolores Park

Fri, Jun 19, 2020 at 4:00 PM

Jessica Hing,

Thank you, Jessica.

I've been volunteering with the city for two years. This reservation system has been a point of frustration for most tennis players in the community.

The feedback I've received has been overwhelmingly to get rid of it-- not expand it. People don't feel heard right now.

David Becker