

Director cites 'pressure' to resign

By **MIKE NOLAN**
Staff Writer

LANSING — Citing harassment by board members, Lansing Library Director Joanne Jensen submitted her resignation to the board Thursday night after 24 years as head of the library.

Board members said they were "shocked" to learn of Jensen's decision, and denied they had harassed her or forced her to resign.

Jensen's resignation is effective July 1, but she will take vacation time and sick days she has accrued and her last day will be Monday.

Board members said the library's assistant director would most likely assume Jensen's job while a search is conducted for a new director.

Jensen said that she has been harassed and insulted by board members, and specifically mentioned members Gwen Molenaar and Bonnie Garrison as having "done everything possible to make my job difficult."

Some of the harassment has taken the form of personal attacks, Jensen said, but those charges were denied by Molenaar and Garrison.

"This is totally her decision (to resign)," Garrison said. "We did not fire her."

Jensen said a decision by the board not to give her a raise was "the last straw."

All other library employees were given raises, according to board member William Lathrop. He said that Jensen's job performance during the past year was "not deserving of a raise."

Lathrop said that during Jensen's 29 years with the library, which includes five years as assistant director, she has "done a tremendous job."

Jensen said that she was not given a written or oral evaluation of her performance, but in January was given a list of six goals the board wanted her to accomplish. She also said that all other village employees are receiving 4 percent raises this year, and that she is the only one who is not.

When asked whether there had been complaints about Jensen's work, Molenaar said she had received some from the public but did not want to discuss them.

Jensen said the board has made it difficult for her to staff the library because of low salaries being offered. As director, Jensen said she makes about

\$30,000 a year.

Board President David Tanis said he had thought Jensen would stay on as director for another 18 months, when she turns 62, and then retire. Tanis said he was "shocked" to find out Jensen was resigning immediately.

Jensen claimed that Lathrop had phoned her, saying that some tensions on the board could be eased if she wrote to the board and indicated she would resign in 18 months. Lathrop denied he made that suggestion, and said resigning was Jensen's idea.

Lathrop said if Jensen had agreed to retiring at 62 it would have given the board more time to find a replacement.

Jensen, 60, said if she decides to look for a new job it will not be in the library field.