

Capron leader finds bomb in mailbox

■ **Powerful enough to kill:** Village President Doug Meyers believes he has been targeted for political reasons.

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The Register Star

CAPRON — In what police are calling a possible act of small-town political terrorism, Capron's new village president Friday found a pipe bomb in the mailbox

BOONE COUNTY

at his private office.

Neighboring businesses were evacuated, and Main Street was barricaded for two hours while the Winnebago County Bomb Squad removed the explosive device.

Officials later said it was powerful enough to kill Village President Doug Meyers.

"It would have most likely been fatal," said bomb squad chief

Chris Cowan.

Boone County Sheriff Sgt. Phil Beu said investigators would examine whether Meyers was targeted because of his position.

"I don't think we can eliminate anything," he said.

Meyers said he discovered the bomb with the word "boom" written on it about 8 a.m. Friday in a black metal mailbox behind his office at 183 W. Main St.

Police described it as a galvanized metal pipe about 2 inches in

diameter and 9 inches long, capped at both ends and filled with an unknown explosive material. The bomb squad detonated it in a field just outside town.

Meyers, embroiled in a subdivision expansion issue, said he suspects the incident was politically motivated. He said an anonymous caller May 8 told him just hours after he was sworn in as village president: "You won't make it to see the light of day."

"I never had any problems like

this before I got into politics," said the 35-year-old Capron native.

Some of the town's 700 residents describe recent political turmoil as a power struggle between the old and new guard.

Meyers was elected against the wishes of other community leaders who supported longtime village board member Roger Stenerson Sr. The younger newcomer so far has been coolly received at village hall.

Immediately after taking office,

he halted the town's largest real estate development and charged that developer Jeff Petry had gotten a sweetheart deal from community leaders.

At a pivotal meeting Monday night, the village board is expected to decide whether to overrule Meyers and allow the Shadowbrook development to move

Please see **Capron, 2A** ▷

■ **Timeline, 2A**