



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

**Al Mathiowetz, left, and Ed Burdick confer during a 2004 floor session. Mathiowetz is replacing Burdick as chief clerk for the 2005 session.**

## Taking over

Al Mathiowetz was promoted to first assistant chief clerk in 1985. Twenty years later he finally received another advancement.

One of the few unanimous votes on the first day of session, Mathiowetz was named chief clerk to replace Ed Burdick, who retired after 38 years in the position.

“Al learned from the best,” said Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), who nominated Mathiowetz. “If you listen you’ll even think his voice sounds like Ed Burdick. I know of no finer person to serve in the Minnesota House of Representatives as our chief clerk.”

A 33-year House employee, Mathiowetz was hired as an administrative assistant in the chief clerk’s office in 1971. He has also served as journal clerk and second assistant chief clerk. He jokingly said that he doesn’t plan to be chief clerk as long as Burdick. “I promised I wouldn’t work that long.”

Seriously, Mathiowetz said it was a good feeling to have his confirmation vote be 134-0.

“It’s truly an honor to have that kind of support. I guess you could say that hard work and dedication prevailed,” he said while noting the joy of being involved in the legislative process. “There is never a dull moment because no two sessions or

two days are ever alike. It’s exciting.”

Mathiowetz admits he is fortunate to have worked with Burdick and has the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of someone of legendary status.

“He obviously had a lot of patience with me and a lot of encouragement over the years. There isn’t a better teacher around. I can say that I probably had 33 years of the Ed Burdick University of Parliamentary Procedure.”

The unofficial professor has no doubt that Mathiowetz will do an admirable job as his successor.

“I’m very happy for him,” Burdick said. “I’ve watched him develop. He’s very knowledgeable in the rules and procedure and he’s like me in that he loves his work.”

Even if that means sometimes being at the front desk around the clock.

“We all know him as being a person who sticks it out with us on the nights we’re here late and he’s always a friendly guy to have around,” said Rep. Connie Bernardy (DFL-Fridley), who seconded the Mathiowetz nomination. “He’s very competent and he perseveres with us and helps us make the right decisions on the floor.”

**(M. Cook)**